

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star
L'économie de la Jordanie veut oublier 1996
Voir page 12

HAYAT AMMAN SUITES HOTEL
Hayat Restaurant
• Ramadani Evenings until Suhour time
• Iftar Meals
• Bubble Bubble (Nargile)
• Ramadani Drinks
TALA ALALI
Tel. 837175, 837172

AMMAN, 9-15 JANUARY 1997, VOLUME 7, NUMBER 35, 350 fils

اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Israeli fair opens in Amman amidst mass protest

By Raed Al Abed
Star Staff Writer
IT IS an unhappy new year for Jordan-Israeli relations. This was symbolized in the anti-Israeli trade fair protest that occurred yesterday, Wednesday. It all began at 8 pm when anti-riot police, formed a chain on the two sides of the Airport highway leading to the International Fair Hall where the fair was being held.
The protesters, whose number according to some unofficial estimates reached as high as 3000, tried to force their way to the complex by forming a 'human dam.' It was to be right up to the main gate of the exhibition in Marj Al Hamam, 20 kilometers south of Amman. However, police cordoned off demonstrators 200 meters away from the fair.
Protesters came in droves but the trade fair was eventually held three hours later. While the fair was to have 75 Israeli companies, only 40 firms showed up.
The site was like a 'security zone.' Hundreds of security and anti-riot police were fully prepared. They had been camping outside the place since last Sunday. Police also had anti-riot cars, water cannons and police-dogs. When the protest started they showered



Mass protesters assemble just before the International Fair

protesters by water cannons. But this did not dampen down the atmosphere and shoving and pushing ensued from both sides. At one stage police was seen tearing down banners.
"The police are our brothers, they are implementing orders to safeguard security and we [protesters] are doing our duty to protect the national interest," Mr Ahmad Obiedat, a former Prime Minister, and the head of the Jordanian National Committee for the Cancellation of the Israeli Trade Fair said. Obiedat told protesters to avoid clashes with the police, and to adhere to a peaceful sit-in.
The number of protesters could have been even higher if they were allowed to get near the expo. According to eyewitness reports, security forces prevented a number of buses especially from Karak, Irbid and Zarqa from reaching the fair.
Demonstrators were from all walks of life and different political trends. Lower House deputies such as Toujan Faisal, Talal Obiedat and members

from the Islamic bloc were in the forefront.
In addition to the traditional opponents of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, signed in 1994, there was a large number of officials from centrist parties and independents. The Secretary General of the Al Mustaqbal Party, Sulaiman Arar was joined by people like Ishaq Al Farhan of the IAF.
"I am sorry for the day I voted for the peace treaty," said Lower House independent deputy Dr Nazeeh Ammarin, who was one of the 52 legislators who voted for the treaty in November 1994. "The treaty was a mistake, it serves only Israeli plans," he added.
But it was the Islamist slogans that made most impact.
The late Hamas bomb maker Yahya Ayash, who was killed by Israeli agents, was remembered by the crowd. Songs, poetry and slogans immortalizing the man and his suicide bombings, were repeatedly chanted.
Back to the 'pre-peace' era slogans, demonstrators attacked Zionism describing it as the 'forever enemy of humanity' and promised to 'struggle to liberate Palestine and Arab Jerusalem.'
"No to Zionists in Arab Jerusalem."
Continued on page 3



• HIS MAJESTY King Hussein paid a one day visit to the southern Egyptian city of Aswan for talks with the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, yesterday, Wednesday. The two leaders discussed the recent developments in the peace process especially on the Palestinian-Israeli track. They stressed that all parties concerned in the peace process must live up to their obligations towards the principles of peace. They also highlighted bilateral relations and Arab and other international issues. The King attended a ceremony to inaugurate the new Delta project for the development of southern Egypt. He was accompanied by Prime Minister Abd Al Karim Al Kabarti, Royal Court Chief Awn Al Khasawneh and the Jordanian Ambassador to Egypt. In attendance also was Egyptian Prime Minister Kamal Al Jazouiri, political Presidential Advisor Usama Al Baz and other high ranking Egyptian officials.

Survey suggests Jerusalem issue may not be deal-breaker in talks

By Barton Gellman
LA Times, Washington Post News Service
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—With the final stage of Israeli-Palestinian talks set to begin this year, negotiators are turning attention to the difficult issues they agreed to save for last: Palestinian statehood, boundaries, Jewish settlements, Palestinian refugees, and—perhaps most intractable of all—Jerusalem.
A new survey of Israelis, published last Monday, suggests that Jerusalem might not be the deal-breaker it is often supposed. The poll results cast doubt on the widespread view that this Israeli occupied city, holy to three religions and claimed as capital by Palestinians as well as by Jews, is the rock on which the talks are likeliest to founder.
The survey, while confirming Israeli Jews as inflexible over the fate of Jerusalem in principle, breaks significant new ground by probing deeply into what they mean by Jerusalem and where they draw its lines. Though virtually all respondents said Jerusalem is important or very important to them and four-fifths opposed any bargaining on its future, further questioning revealed clear distinctions between neighborhoods.
Every political faction, from right to left, showed strikingly less attachment to the areas where Jerusalem's Arabs live than to Jewish neighborhoods.

When asked about the outlying Arab neighborhoods annexed to Jerusalem after the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, more Jews were prepared to "seriously consider" transferring them to Palestinian sovereignty than to reject the idea outright.
Nearly all such compromise proposals fell short of majorities in the survey, and there was no significant support for what Palestinians frame as their basic negotiating demand: all of East Jerusalem, including the walled Old City, as the capital of an independent state. Even so, according to its generally dovish authors, the survey suggests a good deal more room for maneuver by the Israeli government, if the government wants it, than most analysts previously supposed.
"If there's anything this study can do, it can legitimize serious political discussions about Jerusalem," said co-author Jerome M. Segal, who wrote a 1989 book arguing for a Palestinian state. "It can embolden political leadership."
Few surveys, if any, have probed as deeply into Israeli attitudes over Jerusalem. The authors of this one, Elihu Katz and Shlomit Levy of Israel's Guttman Institute and Segal of the University of Maryland, asked 100 questions in

Continued on page 2

Building joint economic force is a necessity, Arab businessmen stress

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer
INVESTING REGIONALLY was the name of the game for the first Arab Businessmen conference that ended in Amman yesterday, Wednesday.
Under the patronage of His Majesty King Hussein, over 600 businessmen from 15 Arab countries met for three days to enhance pan-Arab coordination and cooperation in the face of what they regarded as the onset of global challenges.
"The presence of His Majesty King Hussein in the conference is a step forward to revive Arab solidarity. It encourages us as businessmen to have a major role in development and shoulder the responsibility to achieve Arab aspirations," Mr Hamdi Al Tabaa, chairman of the Jordan Businessmen Association told *The Star*.
Opening the conference, King Hussein assured Arab businessmen that "no force will be able to block the march towards peace in the Middle East, or stop people's rights to

enjoy stability and tranquility."
The process of development is a joint effort between the government and the private sector, but identifying each other's role helps to remove obstacles facing businessmen in Arab countries, Al Tabaa added.
The conference is the first of its kind to come from the Arab private sector. It was sponsored by the Jordan Businessmen Association and the Egyptian Businessmen Association (EBA).
The presence of the Arab League Secretary General, Esmat Abdul Maguid added to the importance of the gathering which is targeted at bridging Arab economic relations and bolstering pan-Arab ties in view of the formation of regional economic blocs in the world.
Representatives from private sector institutions showed a real desire to join the Arab Businessmen's Council, which was established during the conference.
Some of these businessmen are authorized by their institu-

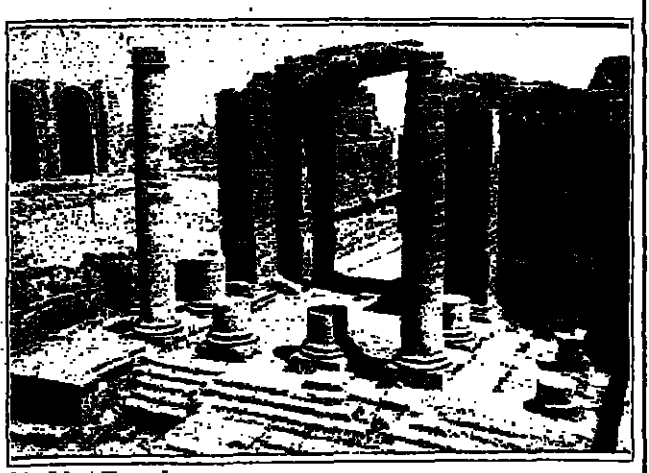


tions to sign the agreement to establish the council while others who approved the council are still awaiting confirmation from their respective countries, Al Tabaa said.
The chairman of the Egyptian Businessmen Association, the co-sponsors of the event, Mr Saeed Al Tawel told *The Star* that the conference proved

highly successful. "Our discussions over the first two days focused on presenting working papers from each participating state, and the last day was an open forum for businessmen to meet directly with their counterparts and exchange views, agendas and proposed projects," he added.
Al Tawel continued that the Arab Businessmen's Council will have a board of directors that comprises heads and representatives of joint associations and business unions to meet regularly to follow up resolutions and mechanisms.
Participants agreed that Amman would be the headquarters of the Council, its head being the chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen Association while his deputy would be the chairman of the Egyptian Businessmen Association, Al Tabaa said.
The last day of the conference was a working session between Arab businessmen. They met face to face to discuss the prospects of joint ventures, investment opportunities and hammer out the possibility of regional projects.
A Qatari businessman, Mr Abdullah Saleh Abdullah said that the conference had a hugely positive trait. It was a good opportunity to meet, and acquaint ourselves with other Arab businessmen to know more about investment opportunities.
Another Egyptian businessman sees the event as a chance to exchange data on commercial and industrial sectors in Arab countries and be able to transfer such data from one country to another.
The venue succeeded in achieving closer relations between businessmen. It underlined the importance of the private sector as a pedestal for future economic relations.

Antiquities fever robs Iraq of cultural legacy

By John Daniszewski
LA Times-Washington Post News Service
BABYLON, Iraq—The robbers struck at midday, using hammers to smash the unguarded wooden door of the small visitors' museum near the Ishtar Gate into Babylon, once the most magnificent city in the ancient world and now among archeology's most famous sites.
They worked undetected. The vast site, circled by 11 miles of walls rebuilt in "the time of Saddam Hussein," the bricks are stamped with a reminder—have been practically unvisited in the six years since Iraq became an international outcast.
The thieves selected 43 rare and beautiful pieces of antiquity: five large seals and 37 seal rings from the time of Nebuchadnezzar, the same biblical despot who destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem and took



the Jewish people into captivity when he ruled Mesopotamia in the 6th century BC.
The theft in April was the last straw for the Iraqi officials struggling to conserve this country's rich cultural heritage.
Every remaining antiquities museum in the country was ordered closed, and all pieces were taken to Baghdad for safekeeping. They now lie under guard in a darkened storage area of the Iraq Museum there, shut away from scholars and tourists alike.
It is, according to state antiquities director Muayed Said Damerji, the only way to keep them safe.
"You've heard of gold fever? We have something like antiquities fever," said Said, who believes that thousands of

Continued on page 2

ARAB BANK
is pleased to announce the introduction of its
Auto Finance Service
at Arab Bank / Al Medina Al Munawara Street
Tel / Fax: 847625, Mobile: 079 44260 - 079 44270
P.O.Box: 720 Tla'a Alali 11953 Amman-Jordan

By Munther Hamdan
Star Staff Writer

Amman cinemas

Running short of reels

THE SALT and pepper-haired Muhammad Al Mughrabi, a man in his fifties, sighed while recalling how the once lucrative and ecstatic work at cinemas in downtown Amman became a symbol of bitter reality. His job as a supervisor at Basman cinema, an area hardly void of shoppers and pedestrians, today earns him little compared to what he used to get in the heyday of cinemas in Amman almost four decades ago.

"Everything about cinemas was better in the old days," he stresses.

However, Al Mughrabi is one among scores of workers in Amman cinemas who feel increasingly alienated. Besides their financial problems, movie houses are no longer the center of attraction for many Ammanites.

Cinema managers and critics say that in the past cinemas used to play an educational and a cultural role. However, it is increasingly declining today because of developments in media technology.

As radio, television, the video recorder and the satellite, came to the forefront, cinemas found themselves on the sidelines.

"Why should people bother going to the cinema while they can watch movies through videos and satellites at home," asks Mustafa Saleh, a journalist and a cinema critic. He says that film producers today depend largely on the latest audiovisual film-making techniques to distract people's attention from the main issue the film is highlighting.

The owners of the old cinemas were obliged to devise all possible means to keep their work going. This is because of the high prices of renting original films and the rental of show halls.

"The current ticket price can't cover the price of renting an original film that can sometimes cost as much as JD 70,000 per copy," stresses Al Mughrabi.

In the past, Arabic, English and Indian films were shown round the clock. For example, the films of the Egyptian actor Farid Shawqi were on top of the list of people's choices. "I remember attending Marlon Brando's *The Godfather* about

seven times during its two-month showing at Al Khayyam cinema," pointed Saleh.

Al Mughrabi says that modern audiences are unlikely to come to the cinema unless "you present them with violent and action pact films that include such actors as Van Dam and Sylvester Stallone."

In their drive to boost their audiences, cinema managers are going wholesale. For only a dinar, one can watch six films nonstop at almost all movie theaters in downtown Amman. "This is a way to attract people who want to watch more than two films for one ticket price. Besides that, cinema attendants shout the names of the film stars to draw people's attention," he adds.

Apart from action pact adventures, some cinemas at present focus on blue movies which attract the youth and the under-age. Instead of assuming an educational role, these cinemas are looking for mere profit.

In the past, going to the cinema was a family affair. While family members or couples made it a habit to visit picture houses regularly, this has all changed. Because of this strive towards commercialism, cinemas today have turned into an all male gathering, that is of course except for some cinemas in the western part of Amman. "Only one or two families a month come to the cinema," says Al Mughrabi.

But how was the situation in the past? How did people think about the cinema decades ago?

Without a doubt, the establishment of Al Petra, the first cinema in the forties in Souk Al Sukkar in downtown Amman, was something of a novelty. People then barely had an idea about the 'cinema

thing.' Yet for them it was a great pleasure to discover its secrets.

Being unfamiliar with the kind of films presented, people reacted to the showings in an emotional way. According to Saleh, people used to clap and cheer while watching the hero beat his enemy or when the film had a happy ending. The cinema, he added, captivated people's minds and the number of moviegoers increased rapidly despite its unsophistication at that time. "Al Hussein cinema used to rent a pick-up trucks with film posters hoisted at the sides and driving in the streets of Amman to announce through a loudspeaker new films."

Today, things have changed. The cinema map in Amman is divided. There are the old cinemas in the downtown area frequented by males only, and the new ones which attract both sexes.

Old theaters are Al Khayyam, Al Urdun, Basman, Raghadan, Zahran, etc. A number of cinemas like Petra and Al Fardous have long closed down. Others like Al Fayomi changed their names to Al Khayyam.

As to the new cinemas, there is now the Plaza, Concord and Philadelphia which have bigger screens. Their ticket price is JD 3 per film.

Among the old founders of Amman cinemas are Muhammad Al Taher, Ismail Al Kurdi, Mahmud Abu Qoura and the Saqali brothers. Each one of those owned



more than one cinema.

"Some of them established production companies in Egypt and even had their own cinemas there. For example, Al Kurdi had the Dollar Film Co., while Al Taher owned the Dinar Film," Saleh says. "During Gamal Abd Al Nasser's era, these companies were nationalized."

Contrary to what many would say about cinemas, there are people who are optimistic and say that with good films,

cinemas can once again move into the limelight. Nasser 56, the Egyptian film about President Nasser and the nationalization of the Suez Canal, was a box office hit all over the Arab world and including Jordan.

"Had the film been distributed to video shops before being shown in movie houses, the number of those who would have seen it would have been much less," Al Mughrabi points out.

Asia-Pacific human rights group meets in Amman

AMMAN (Star)—The Asia-Pacific Human Rights NGOs Facilitating Team, held its fifth workshop on regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Asian and Pacific Region. It was organized by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights in Amman. The conference expressed its concern about the lack of representation of the relevant NGOs in the "open ended team that comprised representatives of interested governments of the region."

The Facilitating Team is the representative body of more than 300 NGOs across the region.

It first elected 240 participants representing 110 non-governmental organizations who attended the Asia-Pacific NGO Conference on Human Rights in Bangkok, Thailand between 25 to 28 March 1993. It then adopted the Bangkok

NGO Declaration on Human Rights.

More than 117 delegates from 28 countries representing national and regional NGOs in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere were present at the Asia Pacific Human Rights NGO Congress held in New Delhi, India from 6 to 8 December 1996.

The New Delhi meeting was the third such gathering of Asia-Pacific human rights activists and the second since the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights.

The Asia Pacific NGOs congratulated the various governments and the UN Centre for Human Rights in Geneva for taking the Amman initiative. However, it suggested the adoption of instruments and mechanisms to ensure compliance with the principles of the UN Charter and in conformity with the already existing international human

rights norms and standards. The meeting recommended the following principles about a regional human rights mechanism:

■ The charter should not permit any limitations or derogations of rights from existing international human rights norms and standards for example, on grounds of national security, public order, state of emergency, or the equivalent states are bound to respect human rights in all situations.

■ The charter must respect the principles of universality, indivisibility and non-selectivity of human rights. In addition, it must reflect the new set of rights, for example, women's rights as human rights, the rights of the children and the indigenous peoples, the right to development as a human right, the rights of refugees and so on.

■ The officially held perspective of the Asian "system of government culture, and traditions" should not be used as a pretext for the continued violation of human rights.

■ A Regional Mechanism on Human Rights must have jurisdiction to conduct fact-finding missions, and undertake country, thematic and other studies; examine the reports of State Parties under various treaty bodies, and to receive complaints from Member States, NGOs, victims and other individuals against violations of human rights.

■ The Commission should be composed of independent experts appointed in consultation with representative NGOs. Its meetings and reports should be accessible to the public, including NGOs; and petitions or appeals under consideration should not preclude action on the same issue by other UN human rights bodies.

■ States parties must pro-

vide adequate budgets and personnel for the effective functioning of such mechanisms.

■ States of the Asia Pacific region must establish national human rights institutions to enforce the existing international human rights instruments and standards, including regional human rights instruments upon their implementation.

The Asia Pacific NGO movement urged governments to reflect their concern on the Right to Development as evidenced in the countries' positions in the discussion on the need for an Optional Protocol for the United Nations International Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The NGOs urged that in the national situations they looked forward to governments making economic, social and cultural rights justiciable in domestic jurisdiction. State Parties were urged to ratify and adhere to the ILO conventions.

In the ultimate analysis, it is the space for dialogue that governments create in the domestic domain that provides the best bulwark for the enhancement of human rights. The meeting commended the building block or step by step approach of the governments. They however said that the NGOs look forward to as a first incremental step, concrete measures that will address the issue of trafficking in children and women.

Finally, the NGO representatives stated that their Meeting must be considered by States as an opportunity to work with the non-governmental organizations—to strengthen the existing institutions, standards and policies, and develop new and more effective ones to stop human rights violations.

Antiquities fever robs Iraq of cultural legacy

Continued from page 1

priceless pieces already have been stolen from Iraq, pieces whose value to art and antique dealers would be in the millions of dollars.

Because ancient Iraq was the stage for the world's first civilizations, the pillaging is obliterating a legacy that belongs to the whole civilized world, said McGuire Gibson, professor of Mesopotamian Archaeology at the University of Chicago Oriental Institute, who has studied the problem extensively. "It's as if the Liberty Bell was stolen and then sold and then was going to end up locked away in Germany or someplace else. What would your reaction be?"

Since the breakdown of order that followed Iraq's defeat in the 1991 Gulf War, museum officials admit they have been almost helpless to staunch the hemorrhage of treasures from ancient Sumer, Babylonia and Assyria that have left the country, sometimes literally by the truckload.

Experts say the pieces wind up with antiquities dealers in London and Zurich, Switzerland, in some cases accompanied by phony documents showing legal provenance, or in the homes of wealthy collectors around the world.

Not only have museums like Babylon's been plundered, but also well-known archaeological sites like the palace of Assyrian King Sennacherib at Nineveh, in northern Iraq.

In 1990, John Russell, a Columbia University archaeologist and art historian, took 900 photographs to document the series of translucent alabaster reliefs hanging in the throne-room suite at Nineveh. They afforded a rare glimpse of religious practices and military campaigns from 27 centuries ago.

Last summer, he was alarmed when a representative for a European museum asked him to evaluate a photocopy of an Assyrian relief it was considering buying. He recognized immediately that it was from the same slabs he had recorded. The museum turned

down the purchase, the seller vanished in a maze of middle-men, and Russell can only guess at the destruction going on.

Recently, a representative for another potential buyer asked him to evaluate photographs of 10 Assyrian pieces, all of which also turned out to have been taken illegally from Nineveh.

"photographs may be the only available record of what was once there," Russell wrote in an article for the International Foundation for Art Research.

He advises anyone considering buying ancient art from Iraq to consult experts, because chances are high that it is illicit. Said the Iraqi antiquities director, said old tombs and previously unexcavated archaeological sites are being set upon—sometimes by entire villages that, he suspects, are filling orders placed by foreign buyers.

There are at least 10,000 such sites in Iraq, and Said's Department of Antiquities can afford to guard only a few. Robbers and smugglers are highly motivated, because even a 1- or 2-inch-square tablet fragment with ancient cuneiform writing can fetch \$1,000-\$2,000 abroad, Said noted.

Recently, the looting has assumed the size and appearance of organized crime, with a gun battles erupting when thieves stormed sites at Nasirya. In Urech, guards killed one would-be robber; two others got away.

To dramatize the problem, two years ago the department invited scholars from around the world to view one large room filled entirely with items confiscated at border crossings. Now "we'd have enough to fill three big halls," Said said ruefully.

The benefits are often farmers and Bedouin herders, he said. Formerly, they earned money by working on archaeological digs; up to 200 local laborers might have been hired at each site. Because of UN policies to isolate Iraq, foreign archaeologists no long-

er come. "The real tragedy is that the people in Iraq digging this up are just people trying to stay alive," Gibson said. "Five dollars to them is a lot of money. Even a dollar is good deal of money."

Since sales of oil and most imports were banned in 1990, the Iraqi economy has been in a downward spiral, and Iraqis are selling whatever they own just to survive. Jewelry, rugs and furniture, along with antiquities and artworks, have flooded bazaars and been taken out of the country in huge quantities.

Not surprisingly, crime and violence have exploded, and there are broad swaths in the north, south and west of the country where the government's authority is barely felt. Gibson became aware of the extent of the problem when he found himself being offered bagfuls of "cylinder seals" and fragments of clay cuneiform tablets when he dropped in on antiquities dealers on Portobello Road in London in the early 1990s. "This has never happened before," he said.

Cylinder seals such as those stolen from Babylon are small, exquisitely carved cylinders of stone or metal that, when rolled over moist clay, left the reverse image as a message or signature—like a very small printing drum.

Used to mark documents or property, they often were worn by their owners on a bracelet or necklace and buried with them when they died.

The London dealers claimed they had come by the items legally, but Gibson was skeptical. "When you are being shown a bag of 100-150 seals, that's not coming out legally."

The trade is a worldwide problem, Gibson said. Persian antiquities cascaded onto the market after Iran's 1978-79 Islamic Revolution and that the problems in Iraq began on a large scale after the Gulf War. Today, much loot is coming out of Afghanistan, he said.

The value is calculable only in terms of what buyers are willing to pay, and in the bustling world of big-league collecting, that can be a lot.

"The bottom dropped out of a lot of things, but it didn't drop out of the antiquities market," Gibson said. "The value of antiquities has only grown. ... An awful lot of this stuff is being bought by people who really love these objects."

Survey suggests Jerusalem issue may not be deal-breaker in talks

Continued from page 1

face-to-face interviews with 1,530 Jews between September 1995 and January 1996. The survey claims a margin of sampling error of 4 percent.

A major purpose of the study was to discover the connections between what Katz called "the mental map of the city" in the minds of Israeli Jews and the actual municipal boundaries drawn by Israel's government after the 1967 war.

Few Israelis, it emerged, recalled that—the government not only "renamed" the city after expelling Jordanian forces but expanded East Jerusalem, roughly ten-fold, incorporating West Bank Arab villages such as Sur-Baher, Um Tuba, Beit Safafa and the Shuafat refugee camp. But the respondents knew clearly which parts of the city were Jewish and which Arab, and they voted them accordingly.

That result is not entirely surprising. For a decade now, since the Intifada of 1987-93, West Jerusalem taxi drivers have been reluctant to drive to East Jerusalem's Arab neighborhoods, unmoved by the government's position that the entire city was Israel's "unified, eternal capital."

The new survey quantifies the extent to which Israeli Jews divide the city psychologically into "ours" and "not ours." Of the 99 percent of those surveyed who said they had been to Jerusalem, 70 percent said they have never been to any of the Arab neighborhoods outside the Old City. Another 23 percent had been no more than "once" or "a few times," and a handful had never heard of the neighborhoods at all.

Katz, a leading authority on Israeli public opinion, said the survey identifies three large blocs of Jewish adults—each about a fifth of the population—prepared to consider some degree of compromise on Jerusalem.

Only the most dovish group, 21 percent, supported the broad principle of "negotiations on Jerusalem within the peace process." But twice that many respondents, 45 percent, said they would consider seriously or very seriously a proposal to "transfer" to Palestinian sovereignty the Arab settlements and villages previously in the West Bank which are now within the borders of Jerusalem. And support reached 59 percent for roughly the same proposal when it was framed as "redefining the city limits" to exclude Arab neighborhoods "in order to ensure a Jewish majority."

The most significant pattern in the survey, according to Segal, is that Israeli Jews of all political and religious views set clear priorities between more and less important parts of Jerusalem, and all of them agree on where the priorities are. No demographic group, even those defining themselves as politically to the right of the governing Likud Party, said that the Arab neighborhoods are "very important" as "part of Jerusalem."

"As soon as you get to where Palestinians live, the numbers fall off a cliff," Segal said.

CLASSIFIEDS

● The University of Bologna in Italy is looking for every foreign students (non-Italian) who graduated in Bologna from 1945. An important social research has been started and a questionnaire will be sent to the graduates contacted. All foreign graduates are kindly asked to write their current address to: (Friends or relatives who know useful information are asked to write to: Osservatorio Statistico, Dipartimento di Scienze Statistiche "P. Forti", Università di Bologna, via Belle Arti 41, 40126 Bologna BO, ITALIA

● Antiquarian books and old prints by David Roberts and W. H. Bartlett for sale. Viewers of Jerusalem, The Holy Land and Petra. Please call 664805.

JORDAN TODAY
TOURISM • CULTURE • ENTERTAINMENT
JANUARY 1997

The Rituals of Ramadan

January Issue

For More Information Call 652380

POWER JOG
The ultimate indoor running machine
It's perfect for
Hotels, Embassies, Sport Clubs, Hospitals,
Mansions & Villas

POWER JOG
is the product of
Sport Engineering
Ltd - Birmingham,
England
and holding a quality
certificate of
ISO 2002
EN 2900
BSI

Sole Agent:
Ibrahim Abu-Jubara, International Fitness,
Jaber Commercial Complex, Mecca St.
Tel: 822345, Fax: 825581

The Star
Tel: 652380

Canadian Graduate Association
Are you a Canadian residing in Jordan?
Are you a Canadian Graduate?
or, Are you working with Canadian industries?

If you answer yet to any of the above then contact the Canadian Graduate Association immediately. From establishing contacts to parties to receptions, CGA promises your call will be the first step in joining a fun-filled association. Call now to become a member or volunteer as one of the founders.

Call 821-590/821-591 between 10 to 2.

JORDAN

W E E K

An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar



It's like the Hebron negotiations, I keep going back and forth



No coupons!

Anyone with a cellular phone will not be eligible for supply coupons! In a directive, the Ministry of Supply stated that those who have cellular phones don't need supply coupons. These are supposed to be for the needy, ministry officials argue, as if we didn't know. The ministry of course would be right in normal circumstances, however, people in this country like to put on a big show, showing-off is the word. Quite a lot of people who carry cellular phones these days can't be categorized as belonging to the high- or even medium-income categories and are likely to feel hard done by. But the ministry's decision, if true, would be rather foolish to say the least. Will Supply officials, for instance, now stop demanding to see proof of income and start looking for cellars. Where would they be looking for, on the persons themselves, in their pockets, or in their bags, "excuse me please let me check your pockets," that really would be a sight for sore eyes. It is really quite hard to imagine people going in to collect their coupons in supply centers while talking to their pals on the other side of the line. Of course, I could be wrong.

The election season

The season of elections is upon us again. No, it is not the national elections, or the local, but it is for the professional associations. First to kick off is the elections for Jordan's Lawyers Association (JLA). Although it is not till March, the door has just opened for anyone who want to stand for the post of president or for the association's council. The present JLA president Hussein Mijalli is standing for re-election. However, he is challenged by two other seasoned lawyers, Salah Al Armouti and Jawad Younis, the former defence lawyer of Leith Shbeilat. What is interesting is that the 300 JLA lawyers from the West Bank will be taking part in the elections. The association has 4000 members. Elections for medical practitioners and chemists will also be taking place.

...And the Writer's Association

Elections for the post of president of the Jordan Writer's Association (JWA), that will take place in April, is likely to prove even hotter. There are 10 persons who nominated themselves to the post. These include few surprises. The former Minister of Information, Dr Khalid Al Karaki is putting his name down. Whether he wins or not is for the JWA members to decide, but Dr Karaki will likely face a tough opposition from veterans like Fakhri Qawar, Saleh Al Karaki, Hashim Gharaibeh, Sulaiman Al Azzi, Abdullah Radwan and Jamal Naji. The JWA has 405 members.



Al Karaki

Getting the boot! Not a chance

It seems that *Ahlan Houkouna*, that Arabic program of fun and laughter, did not get the boot after all. It was not the case of pulling the plug out on Nabeel and Hisham. According to JTV director, Nasser Joudah, the program performed its full quota. They screened 12 of the 13 episodes. Joudah said that JTV decided not to air the final episode because the comic duo sought to do a reevaluation program of their past episode. However, *Ahlan Houkouna* came under fire right from the start. Its sketches of Lower House sessions created much criticism from deputies who unsuccessfully lobbied JTV to cancel the program. In the end we can say that freedom of expression prevailed. However, the cancellation of the final program continues to raise much speculation. Was Joudah's explanation sufficient or is there another more deep-seated reason. It would be really hard to argue that Nabeel and Hisham were booted out by JTV, and this is not a cloak and dagger story.

Al Ahd faces splits in its Zarqa branch

Every once in a while political parties in the country face splits. And Al Ahd party has been having its fair share. The latest is collective resignations in Zarqa. In fact, the president of the Al Ahd branch in the city and most of the members have submitted their resignations according to *Al Majd*. It is argued that the branch has been neglected by the central leadership in Amman, and its president Deif Allah Al Qallab, who managed to increase party members to 60 in Zarqa, has not been asked to meet by the Amman leadership for over two months; he says neither has there been any contact with the Zarqa branch.

Satellite dishes for Sale

Well actually smuggled satellite receivers are for sale. The other day Customs officers uncovered a large shipment of satellite receivers and watches that were hidden in a natural oil refrigerator truck that came in from Dubai. After becoming suspicious, the officers began a thorough search of the truck and found 48 receivers and 2500 women and men watches on board. The value of these is estimated at JD 25,000. Normal customs duty on these items is JD 80,106.

UNRWA workers threaten to increase industrial action

Trouble could be brewing again among UNRWA workers in Jordan. The follow-up working committee which is dealing with the conditions of employees has said that it will continue to take industrial action if its demands are not met. The committee has already sent a message to UNRWA Director-General, Peter Hansen, who is yet to reply to. The workers are demanding a change in the policy of wages and salaries so that it would take into account the increased cost of living, an improved end of term service and early retirement. The working committee has already recommended a daily one-hour stoppage, but threatened to increase their industrial action.

Prince Hassan receives international prize

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan receives an international prize, tomorrow, Friday, from the Institute of Science and Society in Madrid. The Science and Society Prize is given for the Prince's work to further international political and economic and security cooperation as well as human understanding, human rights and peace-keeping. Throughout many years, Prince Hassan worked hard to bring about common understanding between the different people of the globe.

At a ceremony held tomorrow, Prince Hassan will be one of the main speakers at the institute, whose honorary president is King Juan Carlos of Spain.

Previous recipients of the prize include Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez from Chile (1987), Helmut Lidemann, former deputy secretary general for Human Rights of the UN (1990), and Marii Ahtisaari, the president of Finland (1993-94).

The Science and Society Prize reflects

the Spanish view of building a more peaceful world based on fairness and justice and which is sensitive to the public opinion of other countries. This is something that Prince Hassan always believed in and advocated.

After the ceremony, the Prince will attend a conference on the Mediterranean Countries, that is organized by non-governmental organizations. The conference's aim is to further understanding between the countries of the region and work for a better world.

The meeting will be working according to the principles of the Mediterranean Charter that was adopted in 1996 which consider the Mediterranean region as the cradle of the great monotheistic religions, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.



Liberalization of prices require supervision, experts argue

By Ilham Sadeq
Special to The Star

THE GOVERNMENT'S intention to liberalize consumer goods after the holy month of Ramadan is awaiting the efficiency of the private sector.

Supply Minister, Munir Sobar said earlier that whenever the private sector offers imported commodities at competitive prices, then his ministry would cease price control.

"The ministry embarked on a strategy in the light of global policies and international trade agreements to give the private sector a greater role. We have removed restrictions on imported auto spareparts and basic foodstuff items and are permitting the private sector to import them," the minister said.

"They can also import wheat, barley, sugar, rice, foreign cigarettes, olive oil, frozen meat and chicken, beans and lentils," Mr Sobar added.

However he pointed out that "the ministry will still have a supervisory role over prices and quality to protect the consumer."

Such a development if true could lead to heated competition among private importers. However, despite the warnings of the Supply Minister, prices of certain goods could very well increase. But others could also go down because of market forces.

Analysts see it as a two-way street and say that the beneficiaries will be both the merchant and the consumer. Merchants would be allowed to import and sell on a competitive price. The consumer will thus have a greater choice, better quality and lower price.

"Liberalization of prices gives way to competition among importers and merchants and certainly leads to cut prices. This naturally serves the consumer's interest," Mr Adnan Al Sallakh, general manager of the Export and Finance Bank told *The Star*.

While in favor of such a

development, he said that the government must have a supervisory role or at least have a fixed ceiling.

"Importers must be monitored so as to prevent price monopoly control and safeguard the consumer," Al-Sallakh added.

Free trade is a necessity, but within some restrictions. "This is also to prevent some importers or merchants from generating huge profits," he continued.

From his side, the chairman of the Jordanian Federation of Chambers of Commerce, Mr Haydar Murad stressed that the liberalization of prices was a demand from the trade sector in the past. He believes that the market mechanism is the only one that can build a sound commercial sector which can operate in an open environment with free competition.

Mr Murad expected prices to decline because of the variety of imports that would be coming into the country.

However, there are clearly differences in view. Dr Munir Hamarneh, an economics professor at the University of Jordan, is not enthusiastic about the liberalization of prices.

"Liberalization or flotation of prices means allowing the mechanism of supply and demand to fix prices, without any governmental decision," Hamarneh pointed out.

"In the Jordanian market, we lack the real factors that determine prices, 'perfect competition conditions' do not exist."

On the contrary he added that there already exists a monopoly situation in the country



Sobar

and certain merchants do monopolize the market for certain goods and products.

He added that it is because of this that market mechanisms are unable to fix prices.

Dr Hamarneh warned that this will result in a series of imbalances in the market, a case which requires government intervention.

Liberalization, according to Dr Hamarneh, requires series of measures such as laws to combat monopolies, making the availability of supervision to control profit and provide official control that secures a balance between individual income and wages and the levels of changes in prices.

This indicates the need to establish a balance between incomes and living costs. Any violation or even neglect of this formula will certainly lead to a serious social imbalance, Dr Hamarneh warned.

The market seems to be plentiful these days. Whereas in past years, very real shortage occurred just before the month of Ramadan, this is not the case this year. The Ministry of Supply did its homework this year and carefully planned out a strategy to make sure that consumer goods are available in shops.

In addition to that some prices of basic foodstuffs are really going down. Can we assume that this is from the benefit of liberalization, we can only wait and see. However, Hamarneh said that prices in the world do not usually go down, it's a rather upward increase.

Point of order

By Raed Al Abed

About unemployment

It is really immature to hear an official talking on TV, and in front of a crowd, about the government's intention to create a national strategy to solve unemployment!

Jordanians are no longer prepared to dance to the tune. People have become all too familiar with such government slogans. They know that such must be taken with a pinch of salt.

Unemployment is not only a real point of weakness for politicians but a terrible waste of investment in human resources. This is especially so when one realizes that manpower is the bread and butter of any national economy.

Therefore, reliable information and data is a real need. Indeed, this is the crux of the problem. However, the sorry fact is that it is impossible to obtain reliable and credible information concerning the unemployment ratio.

Why? Because the government's planning kitchen is like a jigsaw puzzle. There is lack of coordination between the Statistics Dept., Social Security, the Civil Service Bureau, Labor or Planning Ministries. Those agencies should join forces and come out with a comprehensive study to provide us with real statistics and facts about the unemployment situation in the Kingdom.

It is only through careful planning and coordination that we can arrive at a wholesome picture that would include the employment situation in the private sector.

But the most qualified body that can really initiate this kind of coordination is either the Prime Ministry, or the Planning Ministry. It is really a simple solution that requires careful organization and methodical thinking.

By doing so, planners can relay the most available statistics to these agencies. They can then share the information and 'plan' accurately with regards to the job market.

The clock is ticking, no time to waste, the unemployment rate in the country in 1995, was officially estimated at 14.2 percent; however others put it as high as 17 percent.

We have to plan to be able to overcome that potential chaotic situation that could face us a couple of years from now, bearing in mind the trend to privatize and the increasing number of graduates who join the labor market every year.

It is a bad shot, Petra

The chronology of events for 1996 that was made and released by Petra, the official Jordanian news agency, misses the facts. It completely ignores the Karak bread riots that gripped the south of the country last August.

The "hardworking" directors at the agency filled its copy with the travels of our high ranking officials during 1996. Could it be that the agency is trying to convey a positive message for 1997? Well maybe, and who can blame them? After all, 1996 was a year of trepidation and anguish.

We find no logic in censuring a chapter in Jordan's modern history, whether it's black or white. If a month of crises in Jordan, which captured the world press and viewers, is not a big deal for Petra then we would like to know what is?

Petra directors have to realize that the agency is not only owned by the government, people too, have a stake.

Such practices have to stop. The Lower House is presently being asked to speed up the draft laws that are currently in their hands for the independence of Petra and JTV.

We believe that more professional talents must be yoked into the operations room of the agency. We look forward to the creation of a state media that complies with the democratic process which we enjoy.

Dropping such events from our past, is an unwise approach, as these crises were tough lessons for us to learn for a better future.

Noor Al Hussein Foundation
The National Music Conservatory

Activities for the Holy Month of Ramadan 1997

<p>15/1/1997</p> <p>Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein</p> <p>MUNIR BASHIR (oud)</p> <p>The Royal Cultural Centre</p> <p>Ticket price: JD 7</p>	<p>18/1/1997</p> <p>Russian Duo</p> <p>MARIA SAFARIANTS (violin)</p> <p>and</p> <p>CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN (piano)</p> <p>The Royal Cultural Centre</p> <p>Ticket price: JD 7</p>
<p>22/1/1997</p> <p>CONSTANTINE ORBELIAN (piano)</p> <p>MARIA SAFARIANTS (violin)</p> <p>and</p> <p>THE ORCHESTRA OF THE NATIONAL MUSIC CONSERVATORY</p> <p>Mohammad Othman Sidq, conductor</p> <p>The Royal Cultural Centre</p> <p>Ticket price: JD 7</p>	<p>25/1/1997</p> <p>PHILIPPE GIUSIANO (piano)</p> <p>The Royal Cultural Centre</p> <p>Ticket price: JD 6</p> <p>In cooperation with the French Cultural Centre</p>
<p>4/2/1997</p> <p>Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein</p> <p>LUTFI BOUSHNAQ</p> <p>In an evening of traditional and authentic Arab music followed by suhur</p> <p>Hotel Intercontinental Jordan</p> <p>Ticket prices: JD 75, 50 and 25</p>	

Tickets available at:

- Alahia Abela Superstore, tel. 688481
- Alissar Flowers, tel. 827695
- Babiche, tel. 661322
- Cafe Moka, tel. 856285
- Hotel Intercontinental, Jordan, tel. 641361
- The French Cultural Center, tel. 637009
- Safeway, tel. 685311
- The Royal Cultural Center, tel. 669026
- The National Music Conservatory, tel. 687620

Israeli fair opens in Amman

Continued from page 1

Amman. It is a shame on the government to allow them here," said Laith Shbeilat, president of the Jordanian Engineers Association who was released by a Royal Pardon last November, after eight months in jail on *lese majeste* charges.

Observers believe the country will experience another round of crises, since the opposition accused the government of ignoring the feelings of the majority of Jordanians who oppose the Israeli fair.

The trade fair is seen to be very much against local industry. Leading businessmen such as Wasif Azar, Hamdi Al Tabbaa and Hidar Murad are against the fair, although they didn't participate in yesterday's demonstration.

"At the time when Jordanian industry is facing bankruptcy, you can not market and promote the industry of an enemy. They are occupying Arab land that is good enough," said Dr Labib Kumbhawli, a political commentator and the rapporteur of the committee.

Protesters who blocked the main road, forced several cars from going into the fair ground. However, few Jordanian businessmen braved the gauntlet and secretly drove into the fair.

According to national committee sources, the authorities allegedly threatened the use of force to prevent the demonstration. But in the end the demonstrators dispersed peacefully when the fair was opened after mid-day by the Israeli Ambassador in Amman, Shimon Shamir.

Under pressure from the opposition, the date of the fair was postponed twice; it was eventually held on 8 January.

The national committee convinced some Jordanian companies to withdraw their cooperation. In the end it was left to the Israelis to jointly handle the organization of the fair with the Jordanian organizer, Mr Fakhri Al Nasser, manager of the National and International Expo Corp.

The trade fair has three days to go. The national committee promise these to be the longest for the organizers. They will again meet today, to draw up a further plan of action. They already called for a three-day general strike in the country.

The committee promised to release a blacklist of those who gave a hand in or participated in the fair. The national committee has urged people to blow their car horns for five minutes, today, Thursday at 11 am across the Kingdom. The general mood in Jordan for the past week was buoyant. Daily newspapers for instance have continued to carry advertisement against the Israeli trade fair and anti-normalization slogans.

LURIE'S WORLD



New Year in Serbia

Our Say...

Arab businessmen: Sending a signal

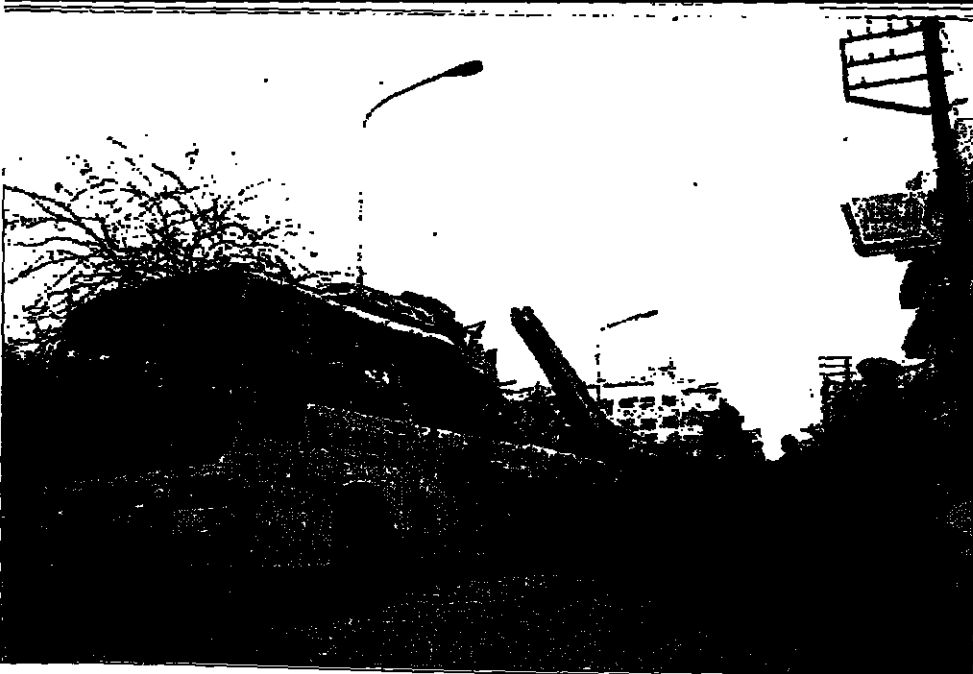
THE MEETING of over 600 Arab businessmen and economic decision makers in Amman this week marks the first serious step in years on the long and arduous road of Arab economic complementarity. But that cherished goal remains an elusive one for a region that is still beset by political upheavals and divisions.

The meeting, which opened under the Royal patronage and organized by the Jordan Businessmen Association and the Egyptian Businessmen Association, could well be a historic one—not for the fact that it is the first of its kind, but because it could set the foundation for a new approach towards inter-Arab relations. In the past two decades we have seen failure after failure in attempts to impose distinctive political and economic groupings within the Arab world. The Maghreb Cooperation Council and the Arab Cooperation Council were two important projects that failed the moment they faced their first political challenges.

The Gulf Cooperation Council remains the only viable regional club, but it too is showing signs of political strain and is facing colossal challenges.

The Arab League, especially in the aftermath of Iraq's catastrophic invasion of Kuwait in 1990, also suffered irreparable damage and its satellite social and economic forums have all collapsed as a result. This is happening at a time when, after the peace process was launched, a new political and economic order is being enforced from outside the region. The series of MENA conferences have come—and may soon go—to deal with the prospects of a new Middle East in which Israel is being groomed to become a leading regional player. But the MENA institution has failed to address the issues of building an Arab economic market, encouraging Arab investments in the Arab world, liberalizing Arab economies and freeing the role of the private sector, opening up labour markets, creating strategies for pan-Arab economic cooperation... etc.

That is why this week's Amman conference deserves our support and commendation. The private sector could offer a way out of the current deadlock. It is already bailing out dilapidated state-run and centrally planned economies in eastern Europe, South East Asia and South America. The private sector is slowly taking the lead in Tunisia, Morocco and Egypt. Private funds are going into mega projects in Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar. Could the private sector, represented by Arab financial institutions, public and private companies and entrepreneurs, succeed in creating an environment of inter-Arab economic cooperation where governments had failed? There is no doubt that without a political will little will change. We hope the Arab businessmen meeting in Amman this week will send a strong signal to Arab governments and we hope these governments will take there appeal seriously. ■



Police and some people inspect the bus that was bombed in Damascus on the eve of the New Year. Nine people died and 44 injured. The Syrian authorities blamed the Israeli Mossad for the blast.

Myth of the 'Pax Americana'

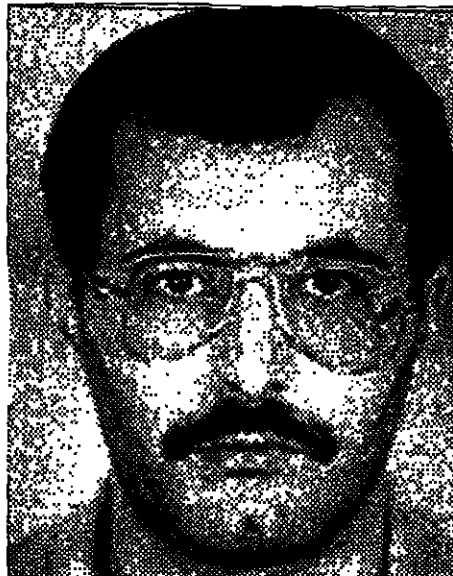
In this poisonous atmosphere, we are still, remarkably, being asked to believe in the Middle East "peace process." The truth—that it is dead and may even have been stillborn—eludes us

By Robert Fisk

FROM AFGHANISTAN to the Mediterranean, it is now possible to travel through the Middle East and not pass through more than one country that still boasts a US Embassy. In Amman, the embassy is a fortress. In Damascus the compound is one of the smallest. In Beirut, Algiers and Cairo, US diplomats live in virtual bunkers, traveling only with large armed escorts. (Israel, of course, is another story.) However, unpleasant the rest of the region's regimes may be, the startling fact remains that today more than half the Middle East is without a US diplomatic corp. Yet we are asked to admire the United States' political "success" in the Middle East—and to have faith that the grotesque imbalance built into the Arab-Israeli negotiations represents a just peace.

The unspoken truth is that US policies, and the Arab leaders who endorsed them, are becoming more unpopular in the region. But Western journalists rarely convey the depth or seriousness of this failure. Instead, they paint a false but glowing picture of "moderate" leaders moving together with the United States and Israel toward a new regional stability. This Pax Americana, which is founded on the Arab-Israeli "peace process," at its center, and the Iran/Iraq "containment program," at its fringe, necessitates much deception.

True, the Madrid peace conference in 1991 suggested that a just peace could be obtained for Arabs and Israelis. Former Secretary of State James Baker repeatedly said that a future peace would be built around UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the first of which demands Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab land and "acknowledgment of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of every state in the area and their right to live in peace within secure and recognized boundaries free from threats or acts of force." Syrian President Hafez Assad asked for—and re-



Yahya Ayyash remembered

Yasir Arafat's secret negotiations with the Israelis, however, destroyed the trust that was built into these official talks. For the 1993 Oslo agreement, while it claimed to be based on Resolutions 242 and 338, undermined them. It allowed for an Israeli redeployment in—rather than withdrawal from—the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It contained no international guarantees. And it fatally postponed discussion of the very issues that would have ensured real peace: future status of Jerusalem, Jewish settlements, a Palestinian state and the fate of the exiled 1948 Palestinian refugees who now number more than three million.

Oslo allowed an all-powerful Israel, backed by the most pro-Israeli US administration in a generation, to delay the timetable of withdrawals and begin to build huge new settler roads across the West Bank, slicing up the still-occupied Territory like a salami. Arafat was repeatedly ordered to crush Islamic opposition inside the portions of land he ostensibly controlled. And, since the most crucial elements of this "peace"—Jerusalem, settlements and statehood—were to be left to the end of the "process," they could no longer be a cause of contention. Indeed, the very "process" itself was used to legitimize what had been illegitimate. The West Bank, US diplomats were told, was no longer to be called "occupied"; it was to be referred to as "disputed"—as if the Israelis had some claim in international law to the tens of thousands of acres of Arab land that they had seized and built upon after the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The Oslo accord, it turned out, was not based upon UN Resolutions 242 and 338. It provided an opportunity for the Israelis to renegotiate those resolutions.

Most journalists went along with this fiction. When Jews tried to extend a settlement in January 1995, for example, Jerrold Kessel felt able to tell CNN viewers that the settlers "feel themselves fully part of the landscape" and to refer in his report of January 16 to "heritage claims [sic] going back hundreds of years." No attempt was made to explain that the Jewish "claim" had no standing in international law and that the Palestinian "claim" was not a claim at all but legal ownership of the land. By the same token, anyone objecting to the "peace process"—either the Arafat variety or the Madrid version—was treated as "supporting terrorism."

By continuing this tendentious form of journalism into the period of the "peace process," reporters helped to establish a particularly dangerous trend: that of portraying Arabs as intrinsically less trustworthy than Israelis at a time when the Arabs themselves were being forced to accept what many of them regarded as an unjust peace. The vicious Palestinian suicide bombings of this spring were regarded as a direct assault on the

"peace process." In fact, they were retaliation for the Israeli murder of a Hamas bomber called Yahya Ayyash. Those who live by the sword—or the bomb—can expect to die by it, but Hamas was maintaining a cease-fire at the time and the Israelis must have known that the killing of Ayyash would provoke bloody revenge.

Like the Palestinians, Jordanians have shown little affection for their own "peace." On the night of 26 October, 1994, I left my hotel in Amman to walk the eerily silent streets of the Jordanian capital. A few hours earlier, His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin had signed a peace treaty in Wadi Araba, watched over by President Clinton. For the first time in almost half a century, Jordan was at peace. Its sons would never again have to go to war. In any other state, you would have expected the capital to explode with joy. And yet on that night in Amman, not a soul left his or her home. The streets were patrolled only by nervous and heavily armed security men, several of whom demanded to know my identity when I strolled into the empty city center. It was, in every sense of the word, an important news story: "Peace Breaks Out: No One Cheers."

But no one reported it. On CNN, on the US networks, on the front pages of newspapers across the United States, there were identical images of King Hussein and Rabin shaking hands, of President Clinton beaming with delight behind them. This wondrous extension of the Pax Americana that already covered Egypt and the West Bank and Gaza was a miracle that must not be disturbed by harsh realities, especially those that might throw into question the very nature of the peace itself.

The Jordanians' silence is understandable. More than half the population is of a Palestinian origin, and they saw all too painfully how little the Oslo agreement was going to achieve for their brethren on the other side of the Jordan River. The Israeli-Jordanian peace also claimed to be based on UN Resolutions 242 and 338. But the references to Palestinian refugees in Jordan related only to UN humanitarian organizations, and the frontier between Jordan and Israel was recognized as an international border between both states—even though part of Jordan's border runs alongside the West Bank, which is definitely not part of the state of Israel.

For both the Palestinian Authority and Jordan, the promises of an economic boom have not been fulfilled. The government could scarcely have been surprised at the rioting that followed the ending of bread subsidies this summer. Jordanians saw the government's desire to placate the IMF as another sign of their country's humiliation. Was not the Arab-Israeli peace supposed to improve conditions for ordi-



The 'peace of the braves' could be turning sour

nary Jordanians?

It is extraordinary that the only two—Jordan and the Palestinians—to sign peace with Israel after the 1991 Gulf War, should be the only two men to have embraced Saddam after his invasion of Kuwait. Even more incredible is the way we journalists, in our euphoria at the supposed peace breaking out in the Middle East, simply erased these recollections from our copy. It is, of course, an essential act of memory cleansing. For keeping the historical record intact would have raised the one fact that has tormented and humiliated the Arabs since the "peace process" began in Madrid in the aftermath of the 1991 US victory in the Gulf: that to make peace with Israel, and be embraced by the United States, you must be weak, even discredited. The act of signing thus represented, for both Arafat and Jordan, survival.

If forgiveness is bestowed upon those who sign up for peace on Israel's terms, the other side of the Pax Americana is reserved for Israel's enemies. Iran is to be economically isolated, Iraq to be cowed into further submission by UN sanctions and airstrikes. Syria, still on the State Department's list of countries that support "terrorism," is threatened with military attack by Israel. Sudan is isolated for its alleged support for "terrorism," while Qaddafi's unpopularity in Libya remains under UN blockade for its alleged involvement in the 1988 Lockerbie bombing.

As the prospect of a real peace steadily fades away, cynicism and suspicion take over. There is a real need, too, to find a scapegoat for the increasingly probable collapse of the whole process, especially after the electoral victory of Israel's right-wing Likud Party—and there is little doubt that the scapegoat will prove to be Syria. Even before the Likud victory, Shimon Peres had been setting up President Assad as a potential fall guy, arguing that he did not want peace because he had refused to accept the return of the Golan Heights in return for a full peace treaty. In fact, Assad never turned down such a proposal; the Golan was offered back by the Israelis with so many conditional clauses—an Oslo-style withdrawal by stages, of which Assad was understandably suspicious, and a demilitarization on the Syrian side that would, in Syrian eyes, have denuded Damascus itself of any defenses—that Assad could never have signed such a deal. This did not stop Israeli commentators, and their friends in the US media, from rediscovering the Demon of Damascus.

And so the Israeli pillar of the Pax Americana is ever more based upon raw military and political dominance. When that other arm of the Pax Americana—the "containment" policy against

Baghdad and Teheran—supposedly necessitated another strike against Saddam Hussein's barefoot army, we got President Clinton's latest Iraqi adventure. American retaliation for Saddam's military support of the Kurdistan Democratic Party was presented, at least in its initial days, as an act of firm leadership. Only after a week did it become clear that, despite the flurry of cruise missiles, the CIA's \$100 million project in northern Iraq—designed to topple Saddam—had collapsed, and the 1991 Gulf War coalition had effectively disintegrated.

The Saudis and their neighbors were obviously far more worried about their own domestic reaction to the US airstrikes than fearful of another invasion by Iraq's depleted army. Add to this the growing belief in the Middle East that election success for Israeli and US leaders appears to necessitate bombing Arabs—even if Shimon Peres's April onslaught in Lebanon went astray after the Qana bloodbath—and it's not difficult to understand why Defense Secretary William Perry received so little encouragement during his tour of the Middle East in mid-September.

The United States pays ritual obeisance to the idea of Arab "sensitivities" without understanding what those sensitivities really are. Arab distress at US cruise missile strikes does not spring from cowardice, nor from any secret admiration for the ghastly Saddam. It comes from something far deeper, something heartfelt and emotional about the very idea of Iraq. For Iraq contains what no other Arab nation possesses: both water and oil. Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt have water but little or no oil; the Gulf Arabs have oil but no water. By comparison, Iraq represents a land of plenty, the ideal Arab nation whose naphtha means wealth and whose water means survival. And against this paradise—however mythical in the world of Realpolitik—President Clinton has been sending his missiles.

And now, as the "peace process" dies, frightening signs of mutual hatred and distrust between Jews and Muslims have emerged. Earlier this year an article in *Le Monde* by a leader of France's Jewish community was headlined "Islamist gangrene." On the opposite page, a cartoon showed a Muslim imam with octopus tentacles emerging from his cloak. In *The Jerusalem Post* an Israeli "security expert" is quoted referring to "hundreds of Iranian-directed Muslim militants... slobbering over the promised virgins waiting them in paradise." In the Arab world, a new fit of Holocaust denial has taken hold. Hitler's *Mein Kampf* has just been reprinted in Beirut and has already sold out in the shops. In Cairo, Roger Garaudy's *Les Mythes fondateurs de la politique israélienne*, which attempts to throw the very nature of the Holocaust into question, has been printed in Arabic for the first time. Garaudy himself has just been officially received in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan, feted by Arab intellectuals in all three countries and greeted by no less a figure than Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam in Damascus.

In this poisonous atmosphere, we are still, remarkably, being asked to believe in the Middle East "peace process." The truth—that it is dead and may even have been stillborn—eludes us. Arafat's physical survival has long been in doubt. Jordan, locked into a flawed peace, looks increasingly precarious. The Arabs, if not their rulers, have understood this for months, which is why they give such a warm reception to European leaders who warn of the demise of peace and insist on the fulfillment of the UN resolutions that were supposed to underpin the whole exercise. Yet the United States, uncritically following Israel as usual, fails to grasp that the most important foreign policy initiative of the Bush and Clinton years is in pieces. Is it too late to go back and start again? Is it possible at this critical moment to reinvent land-for-peace—the return of all occupied land for total peace—into the negotiations? If not, many Arabs believe we are destined to suffer years of growing hatred between East and West, and increasing bitterness toward the United States as an uncritical ally of Israel. At the top of the newly elected President's list of foreign policy objectives should be five words: a new Middle East peace.

Robert Fisk, who is based in Beirut, is the Middle East correspondent for London's *The Independent*. ■

The Star

Jordan's political, economic and cultural weekly

An independent political, economic and cultural weekly, published every Thursday in Amman by Media Services International (Info-Media).
Editorial & Advertising: Telephones 652-380, 645-380, Fax 648-298,
P.O. Box 9313, Postal Code 11191 Amman - Jordan, email: Star@arabia.com
http://www.arabia.com/star

Publisher & Editor-in-Chief

Osama El-Sherif

Managing Editor

Dr Marwan Al Asmar

Editorial Team

Raed Al Abed (Home News Editor), Ilham Sadeq (Economic Editor),

Olivier Bras (French Editor), Zeid Nasser (Technology Editor),

Munther Hamdan (Features Editor)

Management & Production

Mahmoud Fares (General Administration), Qurban Hussain (Production),

Ali Nimer (Accountant), Zaki Qurban (Layout), Fouad Jbaur (Archive)

The Star is serviced by LA Times-Washington Post News Service, Cartoonists International (Lurie cartoons), PANOS, The WorldPaper, Editors Press Service, STILLS and by correspondents in the United States and South Asia.

Member of The International Advertising Association

Subscriptions: (annual) Jordan JD 20, Arab countries US\$ 100, W. Europe US\$ 200, USA & Canada US\$ 200.

Letters to the editor: Will be edited for brevity, must contain name and address of sender.

LURIE'S WORLD



Christmas Tree, 1996

فكرنا من اننا سنحل

ing asked to
it is dead and

Business scene

■ The 1977 budget for the Industrial Cities Corp., is set at JD 7.5 million. The corporation aims to make 1997 a breaking year for industry. It has already bought land to the tune of JD 5.5 million throughout the country. The aim is to set up industrial areas in all the governorates in the country.

■ This country is becoming famous for its private health care. The Private Care Hospital Company is now declared at a JD 4 million. The hospital which is under construction will have 100 beds. About 98% of the paid-up capital is already paid and the establishment fees cost the company less than 0.8% of its capital. The hospital will take 18 months to complete.

■ Royal Wings, the local air shuttle service, has started a direct air route from Amman's Marka Airport to Haifa. This is a twice-weekly flight between the two cities. Royal Wings runs already five-weekly flights to Tel Aviv.

■ An Arab stock exchange could become a reality by the year 2000. An agreement has just been signed to link up the Oman, Cairo and Manama stock exchange in Bahrain. The link, probably the first of its kind in the Arab world, will make it easier for businessmen to trade on any one of these stock exchanges.

■ With the declaration of Al Sharq Al Arabi Insurance Co., the total number of operating insurance firms in the Kingdom reaches 25. After the completion of all registration procedures, Al Sharq Al Arabi was declared last week at a capital of JD 1.5 million. Until 1995 there were 17 insurance companies. The premiums generated by all insurance companies up till that year reached JD 78 million. Invested capitals in this sector hit JD 52.5 million, but they are expected to rise in the wake of the Insurance Law to request each insurance company to raise its capital to JD 2 million, by the end of this year.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 8 January

	Buy JD	Sell JD
US Dollar	0.7080	0.7100
British Pound	1.1983	1.2043
Japanese Yen	0.4540	0.4563
Swiss Franc	0.5229	0.5255
German Mark	0.1344	0.1351
French Franc	0.6134	0.6165
Italian Lira	0.4048	0.4064
Spanish Peseta	0.0462	0.0462

investments follow a steady course, Al Rifai

By Ilham Sadeq
Star Staff Writer

IN THE light of the government's interest to create a better investment environment in Jordan and the growing foreign capital in the Kingdom, businessmen and investors are convinced that our economy is moving on the right track.

"I think that we have made a good progress to attract investments to Jordan and have achieved good percentage in this regard compared with Gross Domestic Product (GDP)," Dr. Al Rifai, director general of the Investment Promotion Corp., (IPC) told *The Star*.

"In 1995, we achieved a 30 percent investment rate, and this rate rose to 31 percent in 1996 which is a good increase," Dr. Al Rifai continued.

However, we need to improve the infrastructure for such investments to give more space to productive services instead of real estates and construction, he pointed out.

Investments in the industrial, agricultural and tourist sectors increased by 35 percent. "This is a great progress compared to 1995," he added.

"The approved investments in these fields in 1996 hit JD 358 million compared to only JD 270 million in 1995; most of these were small and medium size investments, which is very healthy."

More and more foreign capital is coming to Jordan. About 21 percent of these investments is foreign, Dr. Al Rifai pointed out. Indeed the IPC is doing its best to attract foreign capital.

The government wants the private sector to have a greater role in economic development. The new Investment Promotion Law of 1995 offers investors and businessmen a series of tax exemptions especially in the field of agriculture, hotels, hospitals.

marine transport and railways.

"The investment projects that began in 1996 will generate not less than 6000 new job opportunities, and in this respect we do believe that investments have gone up," Dr. Al Rifai explained.

"This is mainly due to the Investment Promotion Law which also provides attractive incentives for foreign investments."

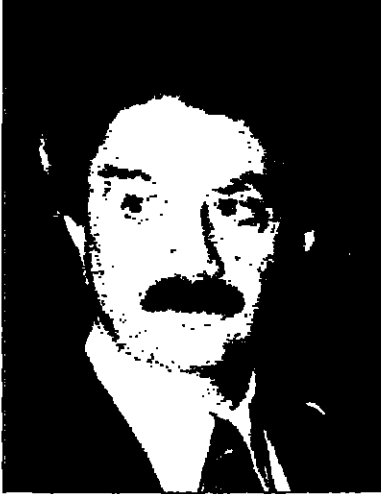
According to the law, foreign investors can own up to 50 percent of companies in Jordan.

Non-Jordanian investors are also allowed to remit abroad and in a convertible currency income and profits from their invested capital in Jordan.

"We recognize the need for administrative reform and the ease of procedures to create more investments. It is more difficult to reform laws than to reform the administration of these laws because one is dealing with changing attitudes and mentalities of people and the public sector," Al Rifai said pointing out that it is a long term process that could not be achieved in a short time.

So far, great progress has been maintained, government agencies are under pressure to perform better and become more efficient. Also, the public demand for a better government is increasing, "we think that this is healthy, it is an expression of high expectations on part of our public and it is therefore legitimate."

Through cooperation and coordination with the government, the IPC established a personnel network to ease bureaucratic procedures and facilitate investments in every government agency where investments are relevant. Al Rifai added that as a government institution, we stress that it is necessary to perform better and live up to the challenges.



Al Rifai

ter and live up to the challenges.

Referring to the so-called dividends of the MENA summits (Casablanca, Amman and Cairo), Al Rifai said that the economic summits have to be understood in their proper context. "They are marks along the road, they are a process and not an end."

Their importance lies in the fact that they represent checkpoints where each country presents its record, and as we go along we understand this very well, he added.

Therefore, he continued, those summits have become motivators and opportunities to present what we have done and what we intend to do. Real business happens before or after such events.

Dr. Al Rifai stressed that Jordan has benefited tremendously, regarding them as opportunities to perfect "national exercises" and deliver reforms that are necessary with or without such conferences.

Some analysts argue that the so-called dividends of peace held over the last three years, and after the peace treaty that was concluded between Jordanians and Israelis, have not yet materialized.



Summits are an eye-opener

Rather, they claim that the main beneficiary was Israel, who through these summits was allowed to achieve its goals to break the Arab embargo and receive more investments.

But other observers are optimistic and consider these summits as fruitful, arguing that at least we were able to acquaint other countries with investment opportunities in Jordan and give a greater role to the private sector.

"The projects submitted to the economic summits are never presented in a form that is final or ready for implementation. However, they are presented as a national agenda to work on and an eye-opener that would trigger our national investments," Al Rifai said.

He continued to explain that "when we talk about projects with such magnitude, we have to consider that triggering the interest and getting into serious negotiations to conclude agreements, is a process that takes considerable time. So it is not possible to present a record of achievements in such a short period of time."

As most analysts stress that political events have a strong impact on any economic development, Dr. Al Rifai said that the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty has not yet translated itself into real gains for Jordan. It is obvious that political considerations strongly affect any economic progress, he added.

Business Chronicle

Arab businessmen revive economic coordination

IN RESPONSE to an invitation from the Jordanian and Egyptian Businessmen Associations, more than 600 businessmen from 15 Arab countries have arrived in Amman to participate in the first and biggest Arab gathering on the level of the private sector.

Such a gathering is a turning point in Arab private sector relations that will certainly unify businessmen's efforts to serve the Arab economy.

With the presence of the Arab League and Arab institutions and funds, Arab action is given a strong push forward to face the challenges posed to their economies.

The last Cairo MENA III witnessed a strong desire by Arab leaders to restore Arab solidarity and establish real economic integration and coordination in the region.

The Arab private sector's role is being enhanced through the setting up of investment, banking, touristic and developing joint ventures.

This undoubtedly involves removing all economic distortions, barriers and obstacles in the way of exports between Arab states.

This first gathering is regarded as a turning point for Arab economic relations and putting them on course. This will be of a major benefit to the Arab World.

Pan-Arab action is a necessity and a prerequisite for any further international integration.

In the light of the global tendency to conclude agreements and form economic blocks that are targeted at liberalization of prices, removing obstacles in front of free trade, tax legislations and opening borders for commodities, the private sector in all Arab countries is given the green light to take the initiative and face up to the worldwide challenges.

The first Arab businessmen gathering is a good step on the road and deserves appreciation. This could be an initial step for more decisions to be made that will lead to concrete achievements.

The ever old-dream to establish an Arab joint market seems to be moving ever closer. The private sector in Arab countries is taking the initiative and for this it should be commended.

\$50 million finance loan for phosphate project

In cooperation with the Jordan Investment and Finance Bank (JIFB), the international investment group, HSBC, is arranging a joint loan worth \$50 million to finance part of the expansion projects carried out by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Co.

The British Bank, a subsidiary of HSBC, studied real investment opportunities in 1996 and presented offers to carry out some projects in the field of exploratory industries. Mr. John Pasco, the executive chairman of British Bank in Jordan said.

Developing these industries in the Kingdom will enhance Jordanian exports and flourish the economy, he added.

The director of Jordan Phosphate earlier disclosed the company's plan to expand its productive capacity to eight million tons at a cost of \$250 million. The company indicated that some global financial institutions are willing to provide this project with the required funds.

Mr. Pasco expressed satisfaction with the share of British Bank clients on the Amman Financial Market which stood for more than 50 percent of total Arab and foreign investments in 1996.

Most foreign investors at the AFM are British Bank clients and their share at the financial market has recorded a noticeable rise in the Regular and Paralel Markets, Mr. Pasco maintained.

The tendency towards privatization in Jordan and the reduction made in restrictions on non-Jordanian investments in the country will certainly lead to a rise in foreign investments, he said. His deputy, Mr. Edward Al Far, revealed that the volume of investments owned by British Bank funds has recorded a rise of 103 percent in 1996 compared with 1995.

The number of British Bank clients who invest on the AFM has gone up by 120 percent, Al Far said adding that this is due to the foreign investment promotion encouraged by AFM.

Al Shaer urges Jordanian businessmen to evaluate investment portfolios

AMMAN (Star)—In a press conference held last Sunday, Mr. Wahib Al Shaer, director general of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) said that despite the decline in traded volume and the fall in share prices during 1996, the increase in Arab and foreign investment activities at the AFM left its positive impact. The total of non-Jordanian investments hit JD 44 million covering selling and buying transactions.

Also the number of non-Jordanian companies that invested on the market last year increased to 19 compared to only nine companies in 1995, Al Shaer added.

Ratio of non-Jordanian traded stocks volume to the total dealings in the market in 1996 was 18 percent. Arab investors traded in JD 29 million, while foreign investors traded in JD 15 million.

In this regard, Al Shaer urged Jordanian investors to evaluate their investment portfolios, to cope with their foreign counterparts.

The stock dealings during 1996 resulted in a total of JD 248.6 million, registering a decline of 40.7% than 1995.

Issues of new shares in 1996 reached JD 187.7 million against JD 329.8 million in 1995, that is a fall of 43 percent.

Al Shaer attributed the drop in traded shares along with the decline in stock prices in 1996 to a series of factors and challenges facing AFM.

Among them the political events and developments due to the setbacks in the peace process in the region. Also the CBJ's strategy to raise the interest rates on deposits to maintain the dinar value and the shortage of liquidity available for investors have their negative influence on the performance of the market last year.

With respect to the new draft Securities Law

that is at its final stage, Al Shaer said that this is a remarkable achievement and will be endorsed soon. It can be considered the fruits of a joint effort made by the AFM management, brokers, Jordanian and international lawyers and ministers (among them Planning Minister, Dr. Rima Khalaf).

Such law is seen to be a great success, as it is targeted at establishing an independent bourse management under governmental supervision.

The government's tendency to privatize a large scale of public sector institutions will undoubtedly attract more Arab and foreign investments and improve the economic performance of the AFM this year, Al Shaer maintained.

Mr. Khalil Tarif, AFM deputy director general, pointed to the participation of some Asian investments, particularly the Japanese, and to new investments by 55 British and American concerns. The volume of foreign investments in the market forms currently 20 percent of the enlisted stocks.

Al Shaer called on all public shareholding companies to translate their annual and mid-annual budget reports into English language.

This will provide foreign investors on the AFM with accurate data about Jordanian public shareholding companies.

On the other hand, the chief of British Bank Mr. John Pasco pointed out that the AFM is the only Arab financial market that have joined the index of the International Financial Corporation (IFC) the arm of the World Bank. Foreign investors plan to increase the volume of their investments on the AFM, and this reveals their growing interest in investing in the country, Mr. Pasco said.

As Chinese economy takes off, millions are left behind

By Steven Mufson
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

BEIJING—In giant, broad brush strokes, the Chinese character for "demolish" is painted in white on the side of the house where retired rubber factory worker Tao Dechun has lived for 40 years beside central Beijing's picturesque and tranquil Houhai Lake.

Soon men with sledgehammers will tear apart Tao's modest courtyard house, ripping down its graceful sloping tile roof and understated gray bricks. Tao and his family will have to pack up their pet songbirds, coal briquettes, beds, bicycles, and the other flotsam and jetsam of a humble life. They will cart off the belongings—along with their more recently acquired television, space heater and CD player—to Beijing's distant, less convenient suburbs.

The Tao family is being forced to make way for richer people in the new, modern China. The Three Seas Real Estate company, a unit of the municipal government, is demolishing old Houhai homes and evicting residents nearby to build \$3 million to \$8 million luxury homes that will be sold to foreign executives, rich expatriate Chinese returning to make money and Chinese nationals who have struck gold during the economic reforms of the past two decades.

"The government doesn't care about the ordinary people anymore," grouched Tao, 61, who receives a \$50-a-month pension. His new apartment will be more spacious, but far from the lake, the old neighborhood and friends. His rent will rise tenfold. His children will face long commutes. And his grandchildren will transfer to inferior schools.

Tao's fate points to a wider issue: As China and other devel-

oping nations join the global economy and make great strides in reducing poverty, new tensions are rising from the ruins left behind. Hundreds of millions of Chinese people like Tao are better off than they were 20 years ago, but many of them remain dissatisfied, buffeted by modernization, jealous of others' greater fortune, worried about rising crime and fearful that they will be pushed aside and tumble back into poverty.

Above all, successful development has created a conspicuous divide between rich and poor in some Asian countries, like China, and worsened it in others. That income gap separates people in China and around the world today as sharply as any border or ideology ever has.

The growth in inequality is inextricably linked to the new model of economic growth in the developing world, driven by huge increases in trade and private foreign investment. As developing countries have adopted free-market policies, privatized state industries and opened their borders, private firms and investors have poured \$420 billion into their economies since 1988. But as international trade and investment leap over national boundaries, it has become easier, too, for the problems of inequality and poverty to cross borders.

For governments of countries that have made great economic progress, that has made managing successful development as tough a challenge as presiding over deprivation—particularly in China, where the Communist Party has placed high political priority on both economic equality and growth.

To be sure, China's success in raising living standards over the past 20 years is by far the most compelling case of how free markets and free trade can work miracles where other development policies have failed. From the time of the

Communist takeover in 1949 through the late 1970s, China intentionally sealed itself off from the world economy, proclaiming self-sufficiency, and refusing any foreign loans and investment because of its suspicions about the motives of Soviets and capitalists alike.

Between that isolationism and Communist Party Chairman Mao Zedong's misguided policies, as many as 40 million people starved to death between 1959 and 1961, the Shanghai University Journal has estimated. Even later, under the commune system, economic growth lagged. When Deng Xiaoping took power in 1978, he declared that socialism shouldn't be equated to poverty, and later the government coined the slogan "To get rich is glorious."

Since Deng threw open China's doors, a gust of foreign investment and technology has helped the world's most populous nation move into the modern age. By the end of 1995, there were 234,000 foreign-funded enterprises registered in China.

China is second only to the United States in its ability to draw direct foreign investment. And foreign-funded companies continue to increase their contributions to China's overall foreign trade; their share at the end of 1995 was 39.1 percent.

"International trade has stimulated competition and promoted skill development at a tremendous pace in this country," said Pieter Bontelier, chief representative of the World Bank in Beijing.

As a result, tens of millions of people have climbed out of poverty, new cities have sprung up from rice paddies, wasteland has been turned into orchards, old industries have improved their equipment and technology. The national economic output has quadrupled since 1980 and the average person lives better, eats

better and consumes more of everything from toasters to telephones, trousers to toys, cars to cognac.

According to government figures, the number of people living on less than 60 cents a day has declined from 270 million in 1978 to 65 million last year. The boom has created opportunities, and money has trickled down from the coastal boom towns to poorer inland regions.

Wu Mingtao, 23, is a painter at a construction site in eastern Beijing. He lives in a makeshift room with more than 40 other workers and can roll his belongings into a small sack, but he earns \$170 a month and sends virtually all of it back to his parents in Jiangsu Province, who have built themselves a two-story house in the countryside.

"I don't think of myself as poor," said Wu, who plans to return to Jiangsu after three more years with Beijing construction gangs.

But even more evident has been the growth of a new class of wealth. One symbol is the recently opened China Club, in what was previously Deng's favorite Sichuan-style restaurant. The club adds a touch of class to the capital of a country that was once obsessed with class struggle. At the formal opening, the British ambassador arrived in his Rolls-Royce, the Duchess of York came dressed in velvet, Kevin Costner and Michael Caine flew in, and dozens of local business executives attended.

Despite the steep price, more than 100 Chinese joined before it opened. "There's nothing wrong with elitism," said David Tang, the Hong Kong resident who planned the club. "Without elitism there would be no progress," he said with his Oxford accent as he stood puffing a cigar and greeting guests in his Chinese traditional silk suit.

MARKET WATCH 28 - 30 December

Highest and lowest performing stocks in the Amman Financial Market

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
↑ JIMCO ↑ Plastic Weaving ↑ Arab Center for Pharm.	↑ Naysak Mowla ↑ International Trade ↑ National Engineering Industries	↑ National Steel ↑ Tajeero ↑ National Engineering Industries	↑ Namsco ↑ Medical Appliances ↑ National Portfolio
↓ Phosphate Mines ↓ National Cables ↓ Jordan Bank	↓ National Industries ↓ Kuwaiti Bank ↓ Jordan Wooded Mills	↓ Jordan Rockwood Industries ↓ In'l Textile Manufacturing ↓ Arab International Hotels	↓ Jordan Tanning ↓ Rafia Industrial ↓ Jordan Sulphate Chemicals
General Price Index: 151.610	151.650	152.440	153.570
Trade Volume: 1064512	1641640	2260398	2747270
Stock Volume: 543356	915182	1111786	1414270
Highest Traded Stocks ↑ Jordan Investment Bank 559000	↑ Development Bank 547774	↑ The Housing Bank 931623	↑ Hotels and Tourism 715488

Palestine Post

Hamdan continues to be kept in Israeli custody

■ On 24 December, Birzeit University student Mohammed Abdel-Aziz Hamdan was issued with a four-month order of administrative detention ending 62 days of interrogation by the Israeli General Security Service.

Mr Hamdan's case received worldwide attention following a 14 November decision by the Israeli High Court allowing interrogators to use physical force and other abusive methods in his interrogation. At the end of this extended and often abusive interrogation, Mr Hamdan was not charged with any offense. (Administrative detention is detention without charge or trial.) Mr Hamdan, a Birzeit University educational diploma student from Ramallah district, was arrested from his home on 7 October, 1996, issued with a four-month order of administrative detention, and taken to Megiddo Prison. On 24 October, Israeli authorities transferred Mr Hamdan from Megiddo to the Russian Compound in Jerusalem for interrogation. On the same day, lawyer Theodore first heard of his detention on 11 November. Theodore visited Mr Hamdan in the Russian Compound on the same day and took from him an affidavit. Theodore immediately shared this information with lawyer Andre Rosenthal and asked that Rosenthal appeal to the High Court for an injunction against the use of violence.

According to the affidavit, Mr Hamdan reached the Russian Compound on Thursday, 24 October at 2:00 am. He was transferred directly into interrogation by six Israeli General Security Services (GSS) agents.

On three separate occasions before an injunction was issued, interrogators violently shook Mr Hamdan while he was tied to a chair with his hands behind him and his head tilted backwards. During the first eleven days of interrogation Mr Hamdan spent most of the time tied to a small chair with his hands and legs cuffed and a filthy hood placed over his head. He was beaten each time he fell asleep and thereby was prevented from sleeping for more than approximately two hours every three days. Interrogators reportedly threatened Mr Hamdan that he would leave their custody only dead or paralyzed. Rosenthal submitted a petition to the Israeli High Court of Justice for an injunction against the use of violence by the GSS on Wednesday, 13 November. At this time the GSS agreed to suspend the use of violence. The following day, however, 14 November, the GSS returned to the High Court to request the revocation of the injunction on the grounds that the defendant "possessed" extremely vital information the immediate procurement of which would help save human lives and prevent serious terrorist attacks in Israel and therefore made it "necessary" to interrogate Mr Hamdan without restraint. The High Court granted the request and revoked the injunction.

Mr Hamdan, who had now been held by the Israeli authorities for 38 days, was returned to the Russian Compound for continued interrogation. In two visits following this Mr Hamdan reported to his lawyers that the interrogators have returned to the previous techniques including one episode of violent shaking, and prolonged sleep deprivation.

On 20 November Mr Hamdan was remained in custody for 21 days, a period ending on 10 December. He remains until today in the custody of the General Security Services. This remand was appealed on 28 November and the appeal was rejected. Between 26-28 November, Mr Hamdan was taken by the General Security Services to the Lebanese border and threatened with deportation. He was then returned to the Russian Compound for interrogation.

His detention was extended for a third time on 10 December for 15 days. In the appeal against this extension the judge in the appeal court ordered that at the end of 15 days (24 December) Mr Hamdan either be charged or released.

On 17 December after more than one-month of interrogation "without restrictions", the High Court—with the agreement of the General Security Services—reinstated the injunction against the use of violence in interrogation.

On 24 December Mr Hamdan was issued with a new four-month order of administrative detention. Administrative detention is detention without charge or trial.

Netanyahu faces cabinet revolt over Hebron policy

By Nicholas Goldberg
LA Times, Washington Post News Service

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM—During the campaign for prime minister last spring, Limor Livnat—a member of parliament and a longtime Likud Party stalwart—was one of Benjamin Netanyahu's closest advisers and staunchest supporters. When he was elected, she was rewarded with a Cabinet appointment as Israel's minister of communications.

But the brief honeymoon is moving quickly toward trial separation: Livnat announced last week that she intended to break with her old friend and oppose the impending deal on Hebron, under which Israeli troops would be withdrawn from a substantial portion of that violence-prone West Bank city.

"I joined the Likud 26 years ago, not for this person or the other—but as a result of my conscience," she explained. "My inclination now is to vote against the agreement. It is a bad arrangement which does not afford the Jewish settlers the necessary degree of security."

Livnat is not alone. In fact, of 18 members of Netanyahu's Cabinet, seven already have announced that they will vote against the agreement, if and when it is finalized and presented to them for their endorsement. On Thursday, Justice Minister Tzachi Hanegbi said he, too, was considering withdrawing his support if Netanyahu commits Israel to a timetable for withdrawing from other parts of the West Bank. And on Friday, two ministers from the Shas Party said they were considering abstaining or voting no.

If all 10 ministers followed through on their threats, the agreement would be rejected by the Cabinet.

"There's a serious problem brewing," acknowledged David Bar-Ilan, Netanyahu's senior policy adviser. "The question is how adept the prime minister is going to be in getting people to support him. In the past he's proved more adept, a master at this kind of thing. We're quite confident he'll be able to repeat this performance."

Technically, the Cabinet vote is not binding.



Going crazy: Last week Israeli soldier Noam Friedman started shooting at Palestinians in Hebron. Six were wounded, two of the seriously

government officials say. There is no law requiring Netanyahu to have his ministers vote on the pact, and no law requiring him to abide by their decision. It is a matter of tradition only, begun when the late prime minister Menachem Begin brought the Camp David peace accords to the Cabinet for approval. What's more, many people believe the Cabinet uprising will, in the end, come to naught—that at the last minute, Netanyahu will be able to convince a majority of his ministers that they have little choice but to stick by him.

But politically, the rebellion in the Cabinet is a serious and telling blow. Just as he has had to prove to the world that he can reach a deal with

the Palestinians, Netanyahu must also prove to Israelis that he can hold his own government together. Already, the dissension is limiting his flexibility in negotiations. If it continues it may mean that his coalition Cabinet—a mixed bag of religious party leaders, hard-line rightists who want to kill the Oslo peace process and centrists who hope to slow it down—is in peril of collapse, and that the diverse groups that swept him into power may prove incompatible and ultimately unstable.

"His problem is that he was elected by a tiny, tiny margin, and he knows that if he wants to stay in power and be re-elected, he has to govern from the center," said Reuven Hazan, a profes-

sor of political science at Hebrew University in Jerusalem. "But on the other hand, if he signs the agreement, he's bringing about the death of the major principles on which the Likud Party was created—that land belongs to Israel, and that Hebron is the second holiest city after Jerusalem. If Netanyahu signs a redeployment agreement, he's throwing their ideology into the trash can. And half of his Cabinet cannot live comfortably with that."

Under the agreement, the final details of which are still being negotiated, Israel would turn over 80 percent of Hebron to the Palestinian National Authority—as it had promised to do in the Oslo II agreements signed last year by prime minister Shimon Peres. The remaining 20 percent of the city, including neighborhoods where some 400 Jewish settlers live and where the tomb of prophet Abraham is located, would remain under Israeli control. Palestinian President Yasser Arafat is also pushing Netanyahu for a formal commitment and a timetable for further redeployment in the West Bank in the months ahead.

Netanyahu is far from enthusiastic about any of this, but under diplomatic pressure from the United States, economic pressure from international investors, and political pressure from the majority of Israelis who badly want a deal to be reached, he has been moving, albeit reluctantly and veering toward a deal.

"It's really amazing when you think about it," said David Makovsky, a columnist for the *Jerusalem Post*. "If you had told Netanyahu a year ago that he would be shaking hands with Arafat and declaring fealty to Oslo and negotiating a pull-out from Hebron, he would have said, 'You're on drugs.'"

Indeed, that appears to be the opinion of many of Netanyahu's Cabinet ministers.

"I never imagined that a government of the national camp would adopt the same policy as its predecessors and encourage the Arab hopes of obliterating the Jews of Hebron," wrote Agriculture Minister Rafael Eitan, leader of the Tsomet Party in a letter to Netanyahu last week.

Saudi scandal which made headlines in the Egyptian press

By the Editor

THE CHECK no.2883/Bank of Alexandria/Cairo/17/10/96 of Egyptian Pounds 482,379 received by Mamdouh Al Leithy, the head of the Production Sector of the Egyptian TV and one of the leading officials of the Ministry of Information from Saudi Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibrahim Al Ibrahim to pay for a new Mercedes T 200 as a gift is the spark which led to unleashing the Saudi Scandal that made headlines in Egypt.

According to *Rose Al Youssef* magazine, which is one of the leading Egyptian outspoken magazines there are a total of 12 New Mercedes which were presented as a gift as the magazine indicated to Egyptian Officials and personalities. Mr Mamdouh Al Leithy who is outraged by the revelation sued the magazine but the leading

Egyptian Lawyers and the Egyptian Press Syndicate stood by the writer of the story Mr Adel Hamouda who is encouraged to go on and reveal a full documented scandal of how Saudi money is used to corrupt artistic circles in Egypt and abuse the moral standards of Egyptian society.

Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibrahim Al Ibrahim, is brother of Sheikh Walid Ibrahim Al Ibrahim and both of them are the youngest billionaires who have access to billions of dollars as their sister is the wife of King Fahd whose personal fortune exceeds the fortunes of the richest man in the world. Sheikh Walid runs in London the MBC, a Saudi television station, which is rival to Egyptian Television and he spent billions of dollars on it to make it a cultural Saudi forum but he discovered that it cannot stand alone without the help and

expertise of Egyptian TV and Film industry which leads the TV and film industry in all the Arab World. Sheikh Walid hit two birds with one stone when he employed the son of Mamdouh Al Leithy as the Chief of the MBC office in Cairo.

Through this appointment the miracle billionaire boy Sheikh Walid believed that he can take control of Egyptian TV production, and in fact he could make some influence to force the Egyptian TV to produce a notorious TV series based on a novel written by the Saudi Ambassador to London Mr Ghazi Al Qoussoubi. The *Freedom Apartment* is considered by *Rose Al Youssef* and leading Egyptian literary circles as containing an insult to Egypt, its society and leaders.

Rose Al Youssef said Mr Al Qoussoubi's novel which portrays his experience during his

study in Cairo cannot be considered from any angel a work of art. *Rose Al Youssef* said that this novel shows the hero "indulged with prostitutes as if he was sent to Cairo for this purpose." *Rose Al Youssef* said also that this novel showed the ignorance of the now Saudi Ambassador to London when he said in his novel that the British evacuation was a result of the struggle of the Muslim Brothers! The production of the series went on and guess who wrote the scenario of the series which contain lies and defamations of the Egyptian Society? The scenario was written by Mr Mamdouh Al Leithy and supervised by his son.

The whole of Egypt was outraged with these novel TV series but silence prevailed for some time until the storm started to unleash the scandal of the Saudi money. 12 New Mercedes were presented to TV

official and Egyptian personalities as a reward for doing this crime.

Mr Mamdouh Al Leithy is now on trial for accepting a bribe as public sector official. The story did not end here but a bigger scandal was revealed. Saudi Sheikh Abdel Aziz Ibrahim Al Ibrahim who is running a business in Cairo benefited from his brother influence in the Egyptian TV and as young Saudi businessman with millions of dollars under his command was introduced, and you can guess by whom, to a young beautiful actress her name Sherin Seif Al Nassr. Immediately she was released without penalty from an engagement in an Egyptian TV production to be free so that he can spend some time with her.

The Sheikh, following the Saudi tradition, marries the beautiful actress a marriage of convenience which means in

the petro dollars morals a marriage for money for a fixed period. The second scandal began when Mr Salah Kabaday, chief editor of *Al Ahram* newspaper revealed that the Saudi Sheikh Abdel Aziz took his bride actress in a private airplane to Luxor, one of the most famous tourist sites in the World in upper Egypt. Mr Salah said that when their airplane arrived at Luxor they were received officially by the Chairman of the Council of the City of Luxor and members of the Council.

Mr Salah indicated that the Sheikh was arriving in a private mission to have a good time and to be received officially is a scandal and called for the name of the higher official who ordered this official reception to be named.

MSANEWS

Gaza through the eyes of an Israeli journalist

By Judith Colp Rubin

AMIRA HASS is exasperated when told how brave she was to live alone for three years in Gaza Strip. "Israelis should ask themselves why they would think this," says the former Gaza correspondent for *Ha'aretz*. "Gazans know Israelis. They look at us as three-dimensional, and not one-dimensional creatures. They know us better than we know them."

Not so, Hass, the only journalist to have both lives and worked openly as an Israeli in Arafat's Gaza. In a new book, *Drinking the Sea at Gaza*, published (in Hebrew) by Kibbutz Ha'meuchad, she describes in detail her life in a place most of her countrymen know only through the eyes of soldiers and the General Security Service.

As she sips a late-night coffee in her Tel Aviv apartment, the 40-year-old Hass exhibits equal measures of sympathy and toughness. She is dressed severely in black pants and a black jacket, with the only colour coming from a small felt rose-pin and a rust-coloured fringed scarf tied around her neck keffiyeh-style. Her hair is short, dark and curly, and she is bespectacled. In moments of contemplative silence, she pulls at several silver rings on her fingers.

Her knowledge of Gaza—all gleaned on the job—is as impressive as any academic's. She can reel off numbers and statistics, and the hometowns of Hamas activists. Her tremendous sympathy for the Palestinian plight becomes quickly apparent, and she is quick to sour when she believes anyone is "practicing an ideology of racism and superiority." But she smarts at any suggestion that such strong political beliefs might have adversely affected her reporting.

"The rest of the journalist is to present

reality as it is," says Hass. "Many people know today that what I wrote three years ago is accurate."

The title of her book comes from a favourite saying of Yasser Arafat, that anyone who opposes a Palestinian state can "drink from the sea of Gaza"—in other words: "go to hell."

"It's a title on many different levels which I let the reader play with," says Hass. "One level is how the dreams and visions of Gazans have not been fulfilled. Another is how I shared with them the hard times. But I also mock Israelis who say 'Go to Gaza,' as a way of saying 'Go to hell.'"

Hass takes a "sociological approach" in her writings, attempting to show the human side of the problems among the sizable refugee population. As the child of European refugees herself, she says she empathizes with the Palestinians' plight.

"It was an indelible discovery to see all this suffering and misery, and amid it all meet great people who have big hopes. There's a cynical self-humor among Gazans that I find very touching. They don't take themselves too seriously."

For example, when a friend from a refugee camp wanted to buy her car, Hass initially agreed, then changed her mind. "I've made two big mistakes in my life," said her friend. "One, that I was born; the other that I made an agreement with a Jewish woman. According to the Koran, one shouldn't make an agreement with a Jew because it doesn't stand up."

Hass tells the story with a laugh. "It's a kind of black or ghetto humour. It's a joke with many levels—it mocks tradition while expressing the sense that there's no meaning to life. As a child of Holocaust survivors, I can relate to it."

She also witnessed moments of pure joy among the Palestinians, such as when

the Israeli army redeployed from Gaza two years ago. Hass was in the Jabalya refugee camp, which was celebrating the first time in years there was no curfew. She remembers the air was heavy with the smell of frying *falafel*, and the residents driving into Gaza City when it was pitch-dark because it was still under curfew.

The difference was so sharp and I felt my friends were testing this new life at night," says Hass. She quickly adds. "It was normal to go out, everybody goes out. It's a Mediterranean culture. People revert to normal behavior very quickly."

Hass believes Gaza's problems are linked to economics. The closure imposed by Israel, she says, affects all spheres of society and shows the extent to which, despite the peace agreement, Israel "still controls the lives of Palestinians."

"I met a couple, she's 35, he's 50. She got a permit to receive fertility treatment and he didn't," says Hass. "I really came across such things every day: students who couldn't go to study, women who couldn't visit their grand children, sick people who couldn't get treatment. The whole nation has a permanent sense of feeling dishonored."

In particularly tragic cases, Hass says she tried to intervene. When the mother of a Gazan friend was dying in a Tel Aviv hospital, Hass helped obtain visiting permits for the woman's husband and daughter.

Writing about Gaza was a natural outgrowth of Hass's upbringing.

Her mother, Hannah, was born in Sarajevo. A fighter during World War II, she was captured by the Germans and sent to the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. She later published a diary of her experiences during the war in the 1960s. Her father, Avraham, spent the war in a

Romanian ghetto where the harsh winter froze off his toes.

As an only child growing up in Jerusalem, and later Tel Aviv, Hass says the Holocaust was a natural part of her childhood. "I never had the guilt or shame complex that other children (of Holocaust survivors) have."

Her parents taught her "never to pose questions to the victim." When her mother's book was published in Germany, an interviewer asked Hannah Hass, "How the Jews could be killed like that?"

Says Hass: "I remember her responding, 'How could the Germans kill like this? You always have to refer the question not to the victim, but to the victimizer.'"

Equally important to her parents' identity was their membership in the Communist Party. Hass was "a red-diaper baby," who grew up immersed in Communist ideology and she learned a philosophy that still permeates her rhetoric and thinking.

She was working on a degree in Holocaust studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem until she decided to drop the subject. "When you're a child you tend to accept things. I grew up grasping how terrible it was. But I came to a point where I just couldn't bear it anymore."

Looking for a job, she found a position as a subeditor at *Ha'aretz* in 1989. She also dabbled in reporting, and when the Communist government fell in Romania,



Hass paralyzed her childhood knowledge and contacts there into an assignment for the newspaper.

Although Hass has taken Arabic courses, her knowledge of the language is still very rough and she does most of her interviews in Hebrew and English. In 1993 she became *Ha'aretz's* correspondent in Gaza. She decided to move there, and the newspaper picked up the tab for her accommodation. She still marvels that anyone would wonder that it wasn't "easier and logical" to live there.

Hass eventually rented an apartment in Gaza's fashionable Rimal neighbourhood. She took other foreign women as roommates since the apartments there, built for big families, are large and hard to clean. Her first apartment was a mere \$250 a month, although prices rose after the Oslo accords.

Hass says her biggest frustration was dealing with Gaza's not infrequent electricity shortages and dead phone lines that almost led to a journalist's worst

nightmare—missing deadlines. But that only happened once during three years of nearly daily reporting, which included the end of Israeli occupation, civil strife and the rise of the suicide bombers.

Hass is now planning her next move to Ramallah, where she will report on the West Bank. In the meantime, she is dealing with the requisite interviews and book parties spurred by the release of *Drinking the Sea at Gaza*.

As for leaving Gaza behind, she says "It became tiring, that's all. I didn't plan on moving to Gaza forever. I missed going to films and concerts in the evening and driving 80 kilometers just like that. Gaza is a big jail and you are confined to (a very small) area. People can't move. They see television and they're connected to the Internet, and they see the big difference between what life offers, and what actually happens in reality."

JP Magazine

Former Beatle will become Sir Paul McCartney

By Fred Barbash
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

LONDON—Paul McCartney, the former Beatle, is to become Sir Paul McCartney. The announcement of the honor—the first knighthood for an ex-Beatle—came nearly four decades after the group took the world by storm, put Britain on the pop music map, revolutionized rock-and-roll and became one of the nation's leading exporters.

It came roughly three decades after the Beatles' breakup, in 1970, which was also about the time people here started wondering when John, Paul, George or Ringo would become Sir John, Sir Paul, Sir

George or Sir Ringo, receiving the title bestowed on hundreds of lesser souls ranging from singer Cliff Richard to Beatles producer George Martin to any number of political hacks and dedicated but faceless bureaucrats.

Even McCartney himself had begun to wonder about it. "There's a guy who's a deejay called Jimmy Savile," he told a *Newsweek* interviewer last year. "There's Andrew Lloyd Webber. All these people are sirs. Sir Cliff Richard. But you can't sit around saying, 'God, I wish they'd make me a sir'."

Monday, in a statement issued while vacationing abroad, McCartney, 54, said it was "a fantastic honor and I am very grateful receiving it on behalf of all the peo-

ple of Liverpool and the other Beatles, without whom it wouldn't have been possible."

McCartney and John Lennon, who was murdered in New York in 1980, were the Beatles' most prolific songwriters, creating, among numerous others, "Please Please Me," "I Want to Hold Your Hand," "All My Loving," "Can't Buy Me Love," "Hey Jude," "Michelle" and "Let It Be."

Those songs—indeed, almost all the Beatles' songs—are still topping the charts today, having been re-released in such different forms as "Live at the BBC" and "The Beatles Anthology." This year, in fact, 20 million Beatles records have been sold, more than in any previous year and more than any other pop group in the

world. More than 40 percent of the purchasers are teen-agers, a testament to the band's power to attract new audiences. Meanwhile, some 418 million people in 94 countries watched a documentary about the band this year. Record and video sales along with TV rights are estimated to total \$780 million this year.

Even after leaving the Beatles, McCartney has remained extremely popular, selling millions more records solo and with his band Wings, which lasted from 1970 to 1980. McCartney also holds the record for the greatest number of discs by a single artist to go gold and platinum—75—according to the Guinness Book of World Records.

Entertainers have been prominent recipients of knighthoods—Richard Burton, Alec Guinness, Laurence Olivier. But as those names suggest, such honors have generally gone to those considered serious stars of the theater or film rather than to rock-and-rollers. Cliff Richard, a pop singer better known in Britain, was one of the few exceptions and was said to have gotten his because he is a favorite of the Queen Mother and has always been considered a "squeaky clean" public figure.

Groups like the Rolling Stones and the Beatles, however, have at one time or the other stood for teen-age rebellion, the counterculture or the drug culture. McCartney himself, after leaving the Beatles, upset some British politicians by recording a single called "Give Ireland Back to the Irish."

In the past few years, however, Liverpool boosters, as well as some members of Parliament, have publicly campaigned to honor the surviving Beatles. David Alton, a Liberal Democrat MP from Liverpool, formally nominated McCartney—in a procedure Prime Minister John Major encouraged—saying that he and the other Beatles had "earned considerable sums of money for the country" and brought it great distinction in the world of entertainment. Nigel Evans, a Conservative MP, helped the campaign across party lines; he called it a "great populist move" when he urged Major to include McCartney last year.

(While the queen formally bestows what are called the "honors" here, the honors list



McCartney makes it into the establishment at last

is largely the work of the political leadership, at the moment Prime Minister Major.)

McCartney's highly publicized philanthropy—he contributed more than \$1.5 million for a performing arts school in Liverpool—undoubtedly helped make him the first honored among the Beatles.

The Beatles had received one of the lower honors in the 1960s (an MBE—Member, Order of the British Empire). But John Lennon publicly returned his in 1969 as a protest, in part against British support of the United States in the Vietnam War—which, conceivably, is a reason no Beatle has been honored until now.

Another reason could be Lennon's later claim that the Beatles were "stoned" when they received the MBE at Buckingham Pal-

ace. Yet another might be the group's performance before the queen in 1963—at a royal gala—when Lennon, before introducing "Twist and Shout," asked the audience for help: "The people in the cheaper seats, clap your hands," he said. Then, glancing toward the royal box, he added, "And the rest of you, just rattle your jewelry."

The McCartney knighthood was announced last Monday on the annual New Year's list—the actual ceremony will come later.

Among the other honors announced was the elevation to the House of Lords of Andrew Lloyd Webber (creator of "Phantom of the Opera" and "Evita," among other sensations) and an Order of the British Empire to Joan Collins, author, litigant and actress. ■



The Beatles down memory lane: (left to right), George, Paul, Ringo and John

French shoppers set sale for annual post-holiday frenzy

By Anne Swardson
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

PARIS—Mark this down: The French government says holiday sales can now begin.

In France, the government not only owns the airline, runs the railroad and operates a bank, it also is in charge of post-Christmas sales. Price-cutting after the holidays is common practice around the world, but here it is the political heirs of Louis XIV who determine when and how merchandise can be discounted.

By law, stores are allowed to offer merchandise below cost only twice a year—during this post-Christmas period and in the six-week summer sale season. And a law passed last year set stricter terms for what constitutes a sale: The goods must have been bought by the

store at least 30 days before, not brought in and instantly marked down.

The thousands of eager consumers who rushed into Paris department stores and boutiques Friday morning, as the official sale season kicked off, have precisely six weeks—down from eight last year—to make their discount purchases.

Some 2,000 inspectors from the Federal Competition, Consumption and Repression of Fraud Directorate were at work in stores, making sure labels on sale products were for genuine discounts and that only previously offered merchandise was on sale and that the time limit had been adhered to.

In recent weeks, dozens of fines were issued to stores that started their sales too early. Violators of the starting date or merchandise rules can be

fined \$5,000 to \$20,000.

"If a government inspector came in yesterday and we had articles on sale, we would have been charged a fine," said a spokeswoman for Le Bon Marche, a major department store.

The regulation of sales is just one visible example of how the approach France takes to capitalism diverges sharply, even in these days of globalization and free trade, from those of its Anglo-Saxon neighbors and allies.

This is a nation that has been brought up on state control of economic activity, from tariffs on canals in the 18th century to state-owned enterprises today. Sales have been regulated since 1906, when merchants were required to get authorization from the mayor to liquidate their inventories.

It also shows the relationship between the French government and the governed French: protective and paternalistic, with a healthy dose of favors for business thrown in.

The law "is to avoid too much competition between merchants," said Bernard Chartier of Paris's city administration office, which is responsible for setting the kick-off date for the sale season.

The date is carefully selected in consultation with merchant and consumer associations, he said. This year, sales started on Thursday in other regions of France and Friday in Paris; both were a week later than usual.

In the United States, it goes without saying, sales are treated as a voluntary transaction between buyer and seller. "We don't regulate sales. Those wacky French," said Pamela Rucker, director of media relations for the National Retail Federation. "I am not aware of any regulation on any level, state or federal, that regulates when a retailer can mark down



goods."

French consumer groups, not a strong lobby in any case, are focusing their efforts this sale season on making sure the items offered are really on sale and not shoddy merchandise brought in just for the discount period. Little concern has been apparent over whether consumers ought to be allowed to pay less during the rest of the year if a retailer wishes to lower his prices.

In a sense, the sale law fits with the general French tendency to do the same thing at the same time. A people who vacation only in August, and largely stay in France, are likely to have little complaint with doing their shopping all at once. By some estimates, one-half of all French consumer purchases are made during the two sale seasons.

Expert shoppers visit stores beforehand, try on merchandise, select the size and color they want, then come in the morning of Day 1 and rush out with their goods. Stores all over Paris were mobbed Friday, with huge crowds mass-

ing outside stores even before opening time. At C&A, a mid-price clothing chain, customers stood in line for 20 minutes at the cash register, holding huge baskets filled with clothing they were buying.

"We are anticipating about 100,000 people a day," compared with a norm of about 60,000, said Evelynne Le Roux, spokeswoman for Galeries Lafayette, one of Paris's largest department stores. "We have sale merchandise in every department."

Some discounting is allowed during non-sale season, as long as items are not sold below cost. How can infractions be found out?

"If there is a suspicion, the inspector checks the (whole-sale) bill," said a spokesman for Jean-Pierre Raffarin, the cabinet minister for small- and medium-size businesses, who sponsored the changes in the sale law.

For anyone who somehow does not participate now, the date for the next sale season already has been set: June 27 to Aug. 7. ■

Angel with a baby face

By Frank Rizzo
LA Times-Washington Post
News Service

NEW YORK—John Travolta gives a wicked angelic smile, so fitting for his latest role as a famous cherub with some bad habits in the movie "Michael," opening on Christmas.

"He's an angel, not a saint," reads the slogan for the film in which Travolta plays the Archangel, complete with slightly soiled wings, who is sent to Earth to bring two lonely people together (William Hurt and Andie MacDowell) and, while he's here, enjoys himself with a good drink, some smokes and a little motel love.

The premise is intriguing but when it comes to discussing matters spiritual, Hollywood theology gets, well, murky.

"Who wrote the rules on angels?" asks Travolta during a recent series of interviews to promote the film.

"Whether it's biblical or historical, no one says angels in the flesh couldn't have had (sensual) experiences," says the actor, who was raised a Catholic and is now a Scientologist.

(The cast of the film could make up an ecumenical conference: MacDowell was raised Baptist and is now an Episcopalian; Jean Stapleton is a Christian Scientist; director Nora Ephron is Jewish; and Hurt favors Eastern spirituality.)

"I think that's a funny idea," says Travolta, quoting the Gospel. "According to Nora, 'What if our so-called beloved angels—when they inhabit the flesh, they just go for it? But they don't forget their job. They have things

to do. So as long as they don't go too far. Just because you like sex and food doesn't make you a bad person. Maybe this takes the onus off what goodness is. OK, he likes to have a drink, smoke and have sex, but can't he still be a decent fellow who gets his job done?"

Does he believe in angels?

"I don't know if I literally believe in them," he says, as smooth as the fabric of his gray tailored suit. "But I believe in them conceptually or metaphorically."

Travolta says he believes more in earth-bound angels.

"I felt that my first and second managers are kind of like guardian angels for me in the flesh—overlooking my career, my well-being, my survival," says the Englewood, N.J., native. "And then there were my parents when I was younger."

For the role of the carnal angel, Travolta, who turns 43 in February, allowed himself to be filmed rather than... slobs.

"I'm not going to fool you," he says. "I only lose weight for movies."

For the film, he weighed around 220 pounds, which he says is not far from what he would weigh if he didn't have to Slimfast down for most of his movies.

The angels seem to be on Travolta's side these days. Since the success of 1994's "Pulp Fiction," last year's "Get Shorty" and the less-than-great "White Man's Burden," Travolta this year came out with "Broken Arrow," "Phenomenon," and now, "Michael."

Next year is going to be even busier with "She's De-Lovely," directed by Nick Cassavetes (John Cassavetes' son), "Mad City," directed by Constantin Costa-Gavras, with Dustin Hoffman, Sean Penn and Robin Wright in "Face/Off," directed by John Woo ("Broken Arrow") with Nicolas Cage and Joan Allen.

And he's about to take the lead in "Primary Colors," directed by Mike Nichols and co-starring Emma Thompson and Kathy Bates. After that, he moves on to the film version of "A Civil Action" based on a book by Jonathan Harr.

He also says a science-fiction film is in the works based on a book by Church of Scientology creator L. Ron Hubbard, called "Battlefield Earth." "I'd like to make it and it's scheduled for next year but I don't have a director yet, just a script," he says.

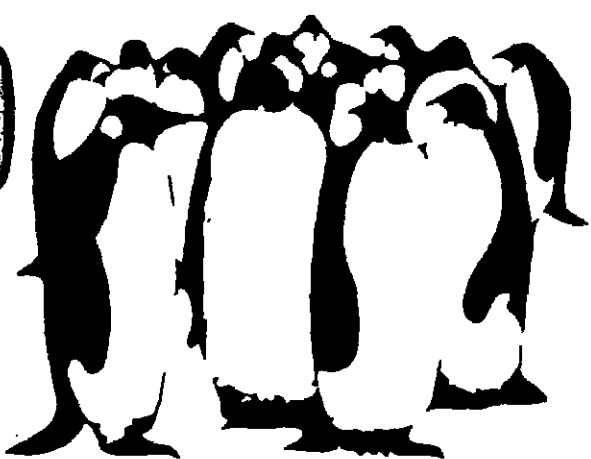
Travolta says he feels blessed that his 20-year film career has taken off again, allowing him to play in such wide-ranging projects, most recently at \$20 million a pop (though he cuts his price for small films he wants to do).

"This is not the time to take a break. It's time to indulge your artistry," he says. "It's a blast." ■



President
ALBERTO F. FUJIMORI
of Peru

AROUND TOWN



Celebrating Flame of Peace

● Pictured in front of the nativity scene at the Forte Grand Hotel are the Austrian folklore group from the region of Ober Österreich.

Every year, a young orphan child visits Bethlehem to collect a Flame of Peace to bring back to Austria. From there on, the flame is traditionally sent to European states. For the first time, in 1996, the flame was brought back to Amman. It was presented to His Majesty King Hussein and then taken to the SOS Children's village.

In celebration of this, Forte Grand Amman, in association with Al Ahlia-Abela, put on an Austrian promotion event with food and entertainment.



Cuban Art Week

Creating self-sufficient symbolism

By Anca De Maio
Special to The Star

The Cuban Art Week in Amman was a major success. It introduced Cuban cultural images and traditions to Jordan. The event, which consisted of contemporary plastic art exhibitions, photography and the showing of three films, was held on the occasion of the Cuban National Day on 1st January. Abdul Hameed Shorman Foundation hosted the activity at its Muntada in Jabal Amman in conjunction with the Cuban Embassy.

The Cuban Ambassador to Jordan, Mr Ernesto Gomez Abascal said that "the present painting exhibition is the most representative sample of 20th century Cuban art ever displayed in the Middle East." "Fifty reproductions of the best pieces of the most famous Cuban painters of the century have been chosen to be introduced to the Jordanian public."

He went on to say that the original paintings make part of the permanent collection of the Museo de Bellas Artes de Cuba. "The aim of the collection is to offer a large variety of artistic forms and styles whose common denominator is the deeply-rooted national culture. The originality of this culture has been enriched through centuries by various convergent factors and different mark-leaving migrations," Abascal pointed out.

Famous artists of the Cuban "Vanguardia"

such as Victor Manuel (1897-1969), Amelia Pelaez (1896-1968) and Carlos Enriquez (1900-1957), distinguished themselves between the '20s and the '40s by opposing "academicism". They imposed new forms on national contents: typically Cuban landscapes with their unique light and colors (Pelaez) and ethnically-mixed human features as in Enriquez' *las Mulatas* (half-caste women) and Manuel's *las gitanas* (gypsies). The artistic trajectory of the generation of Mariano Rodriguez (1912-1990) and Rene Portocarrero (1912-1980) was oriented to sublimating the Cuban "essence" into self-sufficient symbols. Rich in colors and forms, the roster is the recurrent theme of Rodriguez' creation converting realistic representations into essential symbols. Portocarrero's originality consists in expressing the Cuban sensibility through a surprising Baroque floral art of the portrait. His women profiles are primarily flowers and forests, or stylized labyrinth-like delicate lace.

Among the newer generation representatives, Manuel Mendive (1994) and Folra



Fong (1949) stand out for the original reading they give to cultural and historical values. A master of ancient and ultramodern techniques, Mendive translates the complex symbolism of the Island's myths into an intellectualized artistic world that is mysteriously infused with primitive African traditions. Fong has the Asian tradition of Wilfredo Lam and gives a start to the so-called "New Cuban

locally traditional.

The photo collection, bringing together reproductions of pictures taken by three of the best Cuban photographers, features shots of urban and rural everyday images, portraits of celebrities (famous Cuban actors and singers) and anonymous persons.

Three films were presented between 5-7 January. The first one, titled *Inconsolable Memories* features events that took place in Cuba in 1962. It presented the story of an intellectual bourgeoisie who refuses to leave Cuba with his family and decides to stay in Havana under the rule of a regime which he disagrees with. The film won several international prizes and is considered one of the most important films ever produced during the Cuban revolution.

Lucia was the second film on show. Through the story of three Cuban women, the film succeeds in portraying three life stages of the Cuban revolution in quest for freedom.

The story of a policeman who penetrates a Cuban anti-revolution gang residing in the mountains, is the theme of the third film *A Man From Macinico*.

Flavouring Ramadan with musical creativity

AMMAN (Star)—Following its tradition of organizing unique activities during the month of Ramadan, the National Music Conservatory (NMC) of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation will be holding five major events.

Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the main theater of the Royal Cultural Center will stage on Wednesday 15 January the first of these activities. The world-famous master of oud and the art of maqam, Munir Bashir puts his long experience and exceptional talent to practice in an evening of meditation on the oud. The brilliance of Bashir's skill will be embellished by the unique program he has prepared. The program features compositions and improvisations on various Arab Maqams that correspond to the holy month of Ramadan.

Marking the first presentation of Rus-

sian musicians, renowned conductor and pianist Constantine Orbelian and violinist Maria Safarians will perform a violin and piano recital featuring popular pieces from the violin and piano repertoire. The concert will be held in cooperation with the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Amman.

In their second performance, the Orchestra of the National Music Conservatory, with its 62 musicians, will join in to accompany Orbelian in Tchaikovsky's ever popular 1st Piano Concerto and Safarians in Beethoven's Violin Concerto. These two activities come on the heels of the cooperation agreement which was endorsed during the recent visit made by the President of the Russian International Center of Culture to the National Music Conservatory. The two activities will be held on Saturday 18 and 22 January respectively at the Royal Cultural Center and in cooperation with Royal Jordanian.

More classical music is lined up for Saturday, 25 January as Philippe Glusiano, one of the top pianists in the world, treats piano and Chopin lovers, in particular to a piano recital of masterpieces by the romantic Polish composer, Frederick Chopin. The recital



Boushnaq

will be held at the Royal Cultural Centre in cooperation with the French Cultural Centre and Royal Jordanian.

To end its program with a truly Ramadan finale and under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, famous Tunisian singer Latfi Boushnaq will convey the spirit of Ramadan as he chants *Nabawi* praises, *Muwashshah* and poems, accompanied by his ensemble. Boushnaq is known for his ability to sing versatile types of songs. His *Sarajevo* which made quite an impact on the Jordanian public was broadcast on the television television, organized to aid the people of Bosnia last year. He also sang *Lamoni Elli Ghara Minni* which is currently topping the Arab song chart. This is not to mention that he is one of the best to sing the famous *Nabawi* praise *Banat Sou'ad* by the Arab poet, Ka'b Bnu Zuhair. The evening will be held on Tuesday, 4 February at the InterContinental Hotel in cooperation with Royal Jordanian and Tunis Air.

Mall promises to be pride of Jordan



AMMAN (Star)—Amman Town Center is to be Jordan's largest landmark mall. Built over 15000 square metres, the mall is located in Tala' Al Ali at the Youbel intersection. The designer of the mall is architect Mr. Rasem Badran, the winner of the International Aga-Khan Award. The Amman Town Center will have the largest C-TOWN branch both in the US and Jordan.

In addition to the department store and supermarket store, the mall will have more than 60 various types of shops and retail outlets. These include restaurants, rent a car center, tourism and travel office, hotels' agents, pharmacy, antique shops, daily services and information offices, hardware, ladies' and men's wear, banks, money exchange shops and jewellers.

Moreover, there will be an Art Gallery for art exhibitions. To have joy and fun while shopping, the center is equipped with a very advanced security and safety systems. These are run by a highly qualified management staff. Other facilities are five main entrances through beautiful green gardens, a Plaza holding shows and festival celebrations, and Lane Park for children, surrounded by more than 500 parking spaces.



AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ Menatours at Baladna Art Gallery, continues till 14 January.

■ Mini Bazaar at Um El Kundum. Lithographs, old postcards and photographs on Jerusalem, Chinese paintings, arts and crafts, fresh farm produce, off the Airport highway on the way to the Arabian Horse Club, first left at the top of the hill. Friday 10 January from 11:00 am till 5:00 pm. Tel: 664805.

■ Works by Marwan Kassab-Bachi at the Darat Al Funun, ends today.

■ Works by Clara Amado at the Spanish Cultural Center, continues till 15 January.

■ From Script to Abstraction at the The Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, continues till 12 January.

■ Contemporary Arab Artists Exhibition. The New Collection at the Darat Al Funun, continues till 27 February.

■ Les Ripous at the French Cultural Center, 13 January, at 8:30 pm.

Music at its best by Freddy

AMMAN (Star)—Music is an enchantment. It is an art that is learned rather than acquired. The phrase practice makes perfect very much applies to musical training.

It is with this in mind that Freddy for Music was established in 1994. In such a very short time it has built itself a strong reputation in musical education in Jordan.

With a highly trained team of professionals, the music center offers academic and practical teaching methods to all age groups.

Today, it has more than 420 willing students learning to play the piano, guitar, drums, cello and the violin.

But that's not all. The three-storey building in Wasfi Al Tal Street is something of a novelty. While it does not claim to be the first of its kind in Jordan, the owners say quite simply that they seek to popularize classical music.

Indeed, Freddy, one of the owners of the center, looks on his institution as more than just a business. He said that "my aim is to enthuse musical tastes in Jordan."

In a spacious showroom, it offers its clients a large variety of quality musical instruments, together with a full maintenance service.

Freddy for Music services include tuning, installation and maintenance, painting and renovating pianos, and piano rentals. For those with exquisite tastes, Freddy for Music goes to the extent of decorating pianos with Victorian style paintings.

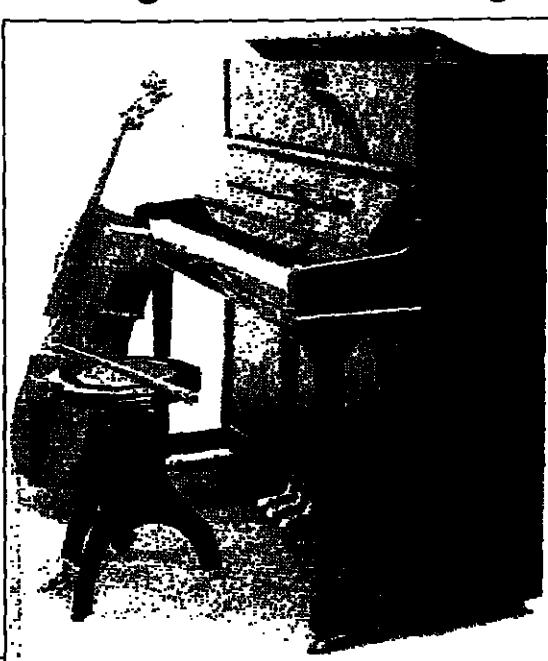
The center was very active in the past year. In 1996 it sponsored many musical charity events.

Mary Daoud, the public relations director at the center and Freddy's sister said "We are keen on holding quality concerts - offering something different to our highly aware audience and clientele."

She added that "we are working on including as many cultural events as possible for 1997. However, they are seeking to be choosy to maintain their quality."

What is interesting is that the center caters for every taste. Aspiring students can either take musical lessons for their own tastes or can sit rigorous exams with accredited certifi-

cates from the UK. Freddy and his partner Mr. Nadim Gargour are both musicians and come from musical families.



SCRAPBOOK

By Christian Doumit

Borderless enchantment

WE HAD all gone to the Tanourin Restaurant to celebrate Salam Kanaan's *Return to Salt* exhibition and the arrival of his new baby girl Eleanor Zara a few days earlier in London. Towards the end of the evening over a glass of white wine, a French diplomat began to talk of his experiences in Yemen and the Sinai. I listened to him with great attention—not only because his experiences were unique—but because when he talked about his wanderings he seemed to paint them. Everything he described remained in my head like a finished canvas. It was a peculiar conversation that evening and nobody has ever given me the ambience of a place so thoroughly as he did Egypt and the Sinai. And he wondered why Middle Easterners had their eyes turned towards Paris and London instead of to all the glorious places in the Arab World.

As a poor boy from Lebanon, I had never felt comfortable crossing Arab borders—except those of Jordan and Lebanon. Many years ago I was refused entry into Libya because my visa had expired by a few hours. I was held incommunicado all night and deported the next morning on the first available flight which was leaving for Rome. Although my destination was Tunis, I wasn't allowed to wait a few more hours to catch the Tunis flight. Of course, coupons were peeled off and I had to purchase a new airline ticket to pursue my trip.

That conversation that evening at the Tanourin caused a certain confusion but I decided to go to the Sinai with my German-born wife and our house guest, a lady from the Swiss embassy in Cyprus. From Amman we took the speedboat to Nuweiba where upon arrival our passports were stamped. The Swiss and German passports were immediately returned to their owners but mine and all other Jordanian passports were kept at the immigration officer's desk as we were asked to wait in the adjoining lounge. Twenty minutes later when all passengers had disembarked, I was escorted to the office of the Chief Immigration Officer who very politely asked me to sit down as he made the motion of going through my passport. I asked him what was all this hassle about and told him that my foreign travelling companions were dismayed at the way Egyptian authorities treated their Arab brethren. He was quite apologetic and told me that he was only reciprocating the comeliness Lebanese authorities extended to Egyptians. I said I hadn't come to Egypt to work illegally and that I was here as a visitor eager to share with my friends the beauty of the Sinai. Clearly he had both made our point and my passport was returned to me without further ado.

Once past customs and immigration, the fascination of the place takes over. Walking by the small harbor in Sharm El Sheikh was enchanting on the bright sunny morning when we visited. The difference in light was immediately apparent as the day progressed. Colours were at once sharper, more alive.

From Sharm El Sheikh, we proceeded to Ras Mohamad where we were able to swim and look at the coral reefs and all sorts of beautiful fish. Our trip ended on a spiritual route when we visited St. Catherine's Monastery on Christmas Day. This monastery has stood for 1400 years in the Sinai Desert. Since it was built in the era of Justinian, it has preserved its special character from the time of the Arab conquest and kept its image as a sacred bible site, where the symbolic meanings of the Old Testament are illuminated and interpreted in the worship of Jesus Christ and the Virgin Mary.

THE FAR SIDE

By GARY LARSON



"OK, here's one, Marv: What's got 12 legs, six eyes, a hairy thorax, was found dead in its display case this morning, and goes 'crunch' inside a submarine sandwich?"



"I can't believe you. We go in and out of this cave a hundred times a day—but you always just have to try that thing!"

كنا من اهل

For many treasures, cold cash dictates their resting place

Generous to a fault, Egypt's loss is the rest of the world's gain

By Omar Younes

THERE ARE NOVELS written about the lengths that a man is willing to go for a woman, but none quite like this story. Neither the Egyptian government, nor the United States Customs Agency nor the US state of Maine's Attorney General can tear antique store owner Terry R. Lewis away from the woman that has caught his fancy—a beautiful 3,000 thousand-year-old Egyptian mummy. But if you happen to have around US\$10,000 he might let you have her.

Late this past summer, the *Boston Globe* wrote an article on Lewis, his mummy and his unique antique store, The Nonesuch House in Wiscasset, Maine. According to Lewis, the Attorney General of Maine called him early the next morning to make sure he had legally obtained the mummy, adding that someone would be coming to verify it. Lewis bought the female mummy from the Morse Museum in New Hampshire three and a half years ago. Ira Morse had brought her to the US in the 1920s.

Somehow a homicide detective was dispatched down to The Nonesuch House to inves-

tigate a "dead body." The good natured detective and Lewis enjoyed a laugh, the detective signed off and Lewis thought his hassles had ended. Then, on August 23 a US customs official paid Lewis a visit and told him they intended to place a restraining order on the mummy until they investigated its acquisition and contacted the Egyptian government.

Lewis was ready to fight it out in court. But under pressure from the press, US customs backed off. "I have no quarrel with the Egyptian government," said Lewis. I believe they (Egyptian government) were pressured by US customs into giving a quick answer."

Lewis has been willing to let the Egyptian government inspect his mummy. In fact, they had informed him in writing that they would be out to his store on December 9 or 10; as

of the 15th they had yet to show. In the meantime, due to his tight financial situation Lewis has decided he must sell her.

"Many people have benefited by her being here. I've had about 40 different schools come and bring their kids. She's open to the public here. She has also brought business to the town, although all the other antique dealers here hate me. It's been a fun ride," said Lewis.

Egyptologist Dr. Kent Weeks, known for his recent discovery of Egypt's largest tomb which is believed to be the burial place for several of Pharaoh Ramses II's sons says the affair is a storm in a tea cup. "There are many legitimate antique dealers in Europe with ancient Egyptian artifacts. There is nothing illegal as long as they can prove it was taken out of Egypt over 100 years ago or, if it was taken less than 100 years ago, that they have documents stating it was done so with the permission of the government. This is supported by UNESCO and Egyptian law."

However, for the past 15 years Egyptian law regarding the removal of antiquities from Egypt's borders has been tightened. Is it a case of closing the barn door after the horse has al-

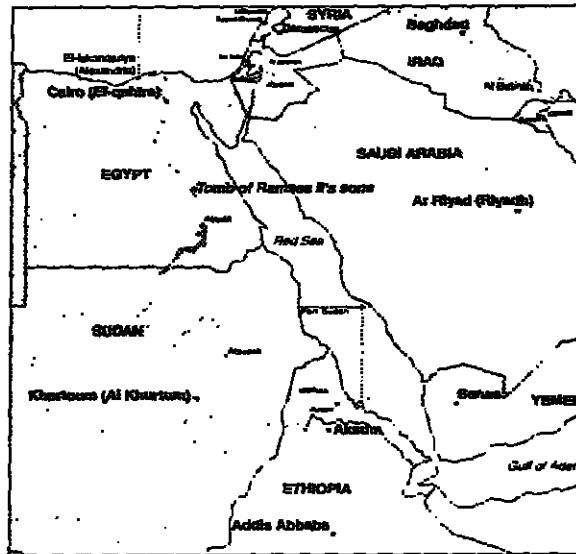
ready run out? Probably not. There are enormous numbers of antiquities still left in Egypt and, as Weeks's recent discovery proves, there are still a lot more to be found.

It is unfortunate that many ancient Egyptian artifacts are spread throughout the world. Fads and silly superstitions fueled this worldwide hunger for ancient Egyptian artifacts. At times during the 19th century mummies were exported to Europe where they were crushed and mixed into a liquid concoction which supposedly helped fight against aging. Cities coveted ancient Egyptian monuments to add importance and majesty to their aura.

The truth is that most of these artifacts were taken legally or, in some cases, given away by the Egyptian government. Egyptians have never been noted as astute deal-makers—their generous nature generally gets the better of them. For example, the obelisk in Paris was given as a gift to France by Mohamed Ali, the father of modern Egypt.

In return the French gave Egypt a beautiful grandfather clock, which has yet to work. ☺

OMAR YOUNES IS ASSISTANT TO THE PUBLISHER AT *The World Paper*.



this is largely because it requires the consent of Italian authorities—mainly those based in Rome—and a breakthrough in a complex and multi-layered decision-making process in which national pride is a major factor.

The campaign, however, continues unabated and is beginning to disturb the silence prevalent in Italy. This is most evident among the Italian diplomatic community. For a country which has a close historical and economic attachment with Ethiopia, it is difficult to turn a deaf ear to such a delicate situation.

The new spirit became more evident when the Italian Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Emanuele Scamacca,

concluded a 1995 visit to Ethiopia by declaring that the monument should be returned. Moreover, at the IGAD head of states summit last November in Djibouti, the Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs officially stated that, "Italy has taken the political decision to return the Aksum obelisk to Ethiopia."

When this political talk about the obelisk results in action is still an open question. But surely it is a signal that the case is irreversible and has reached its final phase. All that remains now is to figure out the procedures for the practical repatriation of the great obelisk.

This case also sheds some light on the efforts being made by Ethiopia to get back its stolen treasures. Ethiopia's apparent success may help define the validity of ancient debts and how long they can endure. In addition, the concerted effort of pressure groups, cultural diplomacy and advocacy at the international level offers a blueprint for successful "collection" of these debts. ☺



HOWARDS HOME

Continued from page 1

the original copies of Ethiopian manuscripts. The issue at large remained under the mercy of individual morality and collective conscience.

For understandable reasons the demise of the Derg and the establishment of a new government in 1991 ushered in a revival of the call for the return of the great obelisk. Various pressure groups were established mainly around intellectual and business circles inside the country.

The campaign gained momentum last March during the centenary of the Italian defeat at Adowa, an event organized to bring Ethiopians and Italians together.

Conferences and public gatherings were also another feature of the campaign. The conference on the safeguarding of historical objects, held in Aksum

in September 1994 and a petition signed by over 13,000 citizens of Aksum asked for the obelisk's immediate return. These efforts were reinforced by a passionate appeal from scholars abroad.

More importantly, the case seems to have gathered irreversible political momentum. The Ethiopian House of the Peoples Representatives devoted part of last year's session to the return of the Aksum obelisk and other cultural and historical artifacts looted on the orders of Mussolini. The session was enlivened by a heated debate involving the public, scholars and government officials. It resulted in a unanimous resolution urging Italy promptly to implement the agreement of 1947.

Italy has already given a solemn, written pledge to return the obelisk. But so far, the Italians prefer to continue dealing with the issue by being completely silent. As one responsible Italian scholar put it,

or another of the opportunists who currently run the country.

"It's very difficult to handle and comprehend," remarks a guide from the Ministry of Tourism, who, like many Ethiopians, has had an epoch of political experience packed into a quarter century. "I have lived under five regimes," says the 32-year-old Var Eng Leang. Evacuated from Phnom Penh in 1975 as a 12-year-old during the Khmer Rouge-mandated exodus to the countryside, she survived three years of child labor. Later she was rehabilitated by the Vietnamese occupiers and sent to Cuba for training. Today Eng Leang is a one-person tour of the confusions and contradictions that muddle the "new" Cambodia.

"My generation, those who have survived, don't know what to think anymore. From King Sihanouk, to Lon Nol, to Pol Pot, to the Vietnamese and now to this coalition government. The only thing we do know is that the Khmer Rouge were animals who, under the guise of peasant patriotism, killed and butchered our country. And somehow they're being granted amnesty and the rest. What can I do about it? Why can't the world do something about it?"

Eng Leang is not alone. The survivors of Cambodia are desperately trying to regain a country that was racked by genocide and now is being ravaged by corruption. The country's timber and fishery resources are being stripped by rapacious private producers from Thailand, Malaysia and even Laos, almost as much as its population was raped by the Khmer Rouge of yesterday.

One debt from the past has led to another for the present. And is absolving those who owe the most horrible human debt. ☺

CAROLAN SOW, JR., EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF *The World Paper*, RECENTLY VISITED CAMBODIA.



Now no evil, you no evil speak no evil. Cambodia's leaders want to erase the past by closing the 'Killing Fields' museums.

WOOLING DEADBEATS

Continued from page 1

Filled with skulls, pictures and the torture weapons used on the estimated two million educated Cambodians and their families who were killed, the threadbare museums document the most grisly and immediate past.

The Cambodian people didn't buy the destruction of the museums. But the government has gone ahead with a policy of amnesty, even guaranteeing jobs—some in the Cambodian Army—for an estimated 50,000 KR fighters who have turned themselves in since 1993.

Today this policy of expediency by a strapped government seeking security has turned into one of open efforts to secure political advantage, with each of the co-prime ministers trying to woo the perpetrators of the horror.

It has created the incredible spectacle of Hun Sen flying to a KR stronghold on the border of Thailand to offer amnesty and have his picture taken by the press. Prince Ranariddh, the other co-prime minister (and not a former Khmer Rouge) had to one-up him by suggesting direct contact with the reclusive and secretive Pol Pot.

One upshot of this political dance is the recent reintroduction of some 4,000 KR guerrillas into the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. Answering to Eng Sary, a chief architect of the KR's genocide who was for a period under official sentence of death, the former members of the Democratic National Union Movement were photographed in November trying on their new official uniforms. In the background, their old and new leaders mouthed politeness through bared teeth as they maneuvered for maximum political advantage.

Let's up the ante in this machine game. It is fair to say the jaded people of Cambodia are braced for the spectacle of the butchers and mystics Pol Pot emerging from a secret lair, serving as a political trump card for one



We're Experts at
English language Training
and Test Preparation for
TOEFL, TOEIC, GMAT
and other essential tests

Your Passport to study in the US!

- ★ Preparation for University and Business School Entrance Exams and Professional Certification and Licensing
We're the world's leader in test preparation

- ★ English Language Programs For International Students and Professionals
We have programs in ten exciting cities in the USA:

New York, Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Miami, Seattle, Washington, D.C., Atlanta, Houston

- ★ University Admissions Counseling
We're really good at getting people into schools

"Kaplan is the quickest and most effective way for an international student to successfully enter the university system in the United States."

KAPLAN

An Educational Subsidiary of
The Washington Post Company

Please send information on Kaplan's courses to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____ Fax: _____

I am interested in the following Kaplan programs:

☐ GRE ☐ SAT/ACT ☐ TOEFL Plus Academic English
☐ GMAT ☐ NCLEX ☐ USMLE Steps 1 and 2
☐ LSAT ☐ CGFNS ☐ USMLE Step 3
☐ CPA ☐ TOEIC ☐ University Admissions Testing

Kaplan has convenient monthly start dates for its programs.

Kaplan Educational Centers, International Admissions Department, 888 Seventh Avenue, New York, New York, 10019, USA

The Star's GUIDE

Programs on JTV from 11-17 January

ENGLISH PROGRAMS

SATURDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
2:30—Cartoon
3:00—Chris Cross
3:00—Feature Film: *The Case of the Witch*, starring Madeleine Länglois & Stefani Gaudri
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—Muppet Show
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Hanging with Mr Cooper (Comedy)
8:02—Oriental Rugs (Doc)
8:30—Prison
9:10—Superman-Lois and Clark
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Journey Into Islam
11:00—Mcgyver
11:50—Classical Movie: Julius Caesar, starring: Marlon Brando & James Mayson
1:15—Ramadan Talks

SUNDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
1:30—The Famous Five
3:00—Feature Film
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—You Bet Your Life
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Fresh Prince of Bel Air
8:02—Oriental Rugs (Doc)
8:30—Babylon 5 (Science Fiction)
9:10—Tycoon (Doc)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Islam in a Changing World
11:30—The River Kings (Mini Series)

1:15—Ramadan Talks

MONDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
1:30—Cartoon
2:30—Deepwater Haven
3:00—Feature Film: *Spirit Rider*, starring Herbert Barnes & Tom Jackson
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—I love Lucy
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Rosanne
8:02—Islam in the West (Doc)
8:30—Babylon 5 (Science Fiction)
9:10—The Lazarus Man
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Journey Into Islam
11:00—Under Suspicion
11:30—The River King (Mini Series)
1:15—Ramadan Talks

TUESDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
1:30—Captain Planet
2:00—French Programs
2:30—Dog House
3:00—Feature Film
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—You Bet Your Life
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Murphy Brown
8:00—Encounter
8:02—Oriental Rugs (Doc)
9:10—The Lost Civilizations (Doc)
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Islam in a Changing World
11:30—Snowy River
11:30—The River Kings (Mini Series)



Superman-Lois and Clark, Saturday at 9:10 pm

WEDNESDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
1:30—Cartoon
2:30—Escape from Jupiter (Science Fiction)
3:00—Feature Film
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—The Muppet Show
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Baker'sfield P.D. (Comedy)
8:02—Oriental Rugs (Doc)
8:30—Challenges
9:10—NBA: Basketball Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Journey Into Islam
11:00—Cobra
11:30—The River Kings (Mini Series)
1:15—Ramadan Talks

THURSDAY
1:00—Holy Koran
1:05—Min Alhadi Al Mo-hammadi
1:30—Cartoon
2:30—Escape from Jupiter (Science Fiction)
3:00—Feature Film
4:50—Call for prayer and if-tar link with Channel One
5:30—The Muppet Show
6:00—French Programs
7:30—News Headlines
7:35—Baker'sfield P.D. (Comedy)
8:02—Oriental Rugs (Doc)
8:30—Challenges
9:10—NBA: Basketball Games
10:00—News at Ten
10:25—Journey Into Islam
11:00—Cobra
11:30—The River Kings (Mini Series)
1:15—Ramadan Talks

Amman cinemas

- Philadelphia I (Tel: 634149): Daylight
- Philadelphia II (Tel: 634149): First Knight
- Plaza (Tel: 699238): The Hunchback of Notre Dame Ransom
- Concord I (Tel: 677420): Tango & Cash
- Concord II (Tel: 677420): Dumb and Dumber

Highlight of the week at the Pleasure Dome

● **Stolen Hearts:** Part-time plasterer and sometimes petty thief (Frank Obrien—Larry) has been commissioned by his cousin to pull a simple job...steal a valuable painting and deliver it to a client. Roz (Bullock) his fed up girlfriend has made him promise that this will be his last scam. As they take up temporary residence in an unoccupied beach house, two teams of pursuers are hot on their trail: the FBI led by O'Malley (Yaphet Kotto) who still nurtures an obsession with collaring famous art thief Phill the Skill and a crew of criminals led by Frank's Cousin Beano (Wayne Robson) the mastermind behind the caper.



Courtesy: "The Pleasure Dome"

ORIGINAL Video Releases

● **DUMB & DUMBER:** Hilarious throughout, Jim Carrey leads in this comedy that gives a new meaning to the word stupid.

● **H. POSTINO (THE POSTMAN):** Italian with subtitles, grossing more than any other European film ever at the box office with \$50,000,000 in the first 10 weeks. This comedy won more than a handful of awards including the "Palm D'or" at Cannes.

● **PINK FLOYD "PULSE":** The concert that stunned the world with its laser show and special effects featured for the first time the performance of "Dark Side Of The Moon" LIVE

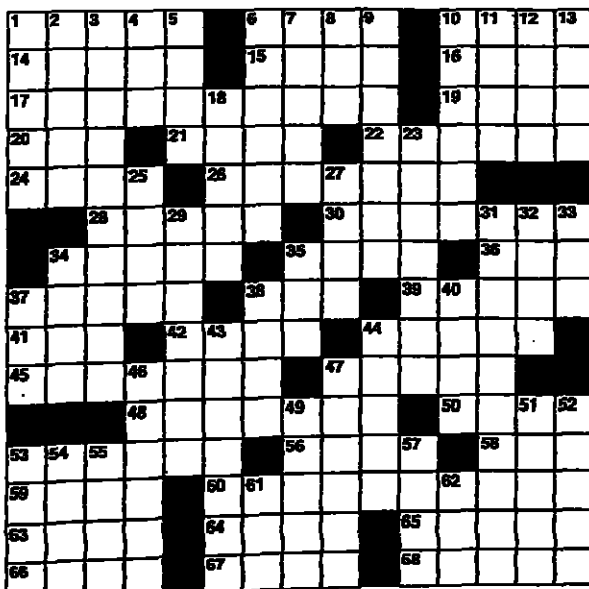
● **ULTIMATE FIGHTING:** You've seen wrestling, Kung Fu movies, etc. but this is different. Strictly for over 18's and not for the sensitive taste or the faint-hearted... this gruesome fight is real and without rules.

● **NIXON:** Sir Anthony Hopkins (Silence of the Lambs, Remains of the Day) plays the scandalized US president in a superb, world class drama. A must viewing!

● Also released are the following titles starring Rowan Atkinson (Mr Bean): Unseen Bean, Black Adder-Sense & Sensibility, Rowan Atkinson Live. Visual Comedy, Final Frolics of Mr. Bean.

Courtesy: "The Pleasure Dome"
Tel: 676538 - Fax: 5338067

CROSSWORD PUZZLE



ACROSS
1 Provoked
6 Fleuret
10 The Eternal City
14 Tormant
15 Hobbed
16 Essayist of note
17 Nonsense
19 Girl
20 Command
21 Busy one
22 Foculness
24 First abbr.
26 Fatulous resistance
28 Let down
30 Michigan city
34 "Message spolved"
35 Movie
36 Formally called
37 Not widespread
38 Faline

DOWN
1 Synagogue figure
2 Over
3 Jr. title
4 Tormant
5 Colored
6 Male
7 belovied
8 Understands
9 A letter
10 Uplight
11 Negligent
12 Hodgepodge
13 Of varied elements
14 Word off
15 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
16 Cowboy, at times
17 Where
18 Chopped food
19 Old garment
20 Dismounted
21 Great
22 Blarney together
23 Sign gas
24 Part of Eur.
25 Singer
26 Possible
27 Tormant, in a way
28 Delightfully
29 Understands
30 Tear open
31 More wan
32 Unmarked
33 Ausible signals
34 Kind of station
35 Word off
36 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
37 Cowboy, at times
38 Where
39 Chopped food
40 Old garment
41 Dismounted
42 Great
43 Blarney together
44 Sign gas
45 Part of Eur.
46 Singer
47 Possible
48 Tormant, in a way
49 Delightfully
50 Understands
51 Tear open
52 More wan
53 Unmarked
54 Ausible signals
55 Kind of station
56 Word off
57 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
58 Cowboy, at times
59 Where
60 Chopped food
61 Old garment
62 Dismounted
63 Great
64 Blarney together
65 Sign gas
66 Part of Eur.
67 Singer
68 Possible
69 Tormant, in a way
70 Delightfully
71 Understands
72 Tear open
73 More wan
74 Unmarked
75 Ausible signals
76 Kind of station
77 Word off
78 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
79 Cowboy, at times
80 Where
81 Chopped food
82 Old garment
83 Dismounted
84 Great
85 Blarney together
86 Sign gas
87 Part of Eur.
88 Singer
89 Possible
90 Tormant, in a way
91 Delightfully
92 Understands
93 Tear open
94 More wan
95 Unmarked
96 Ausible signals
97 Kind of station
98 Word off
99 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
100 Cowboy, at times
101 Where
102 Chopped food
103 Old garment
104 Dismounted
105 Great
106 Blarney together
107 Sign gas
108 Part of Eur.
109 Singer
110 Possible
111 Tormant, in a way
112 Delightfully
113 Understands
114 Tear open
115 More wan
116 Unmarked
117 Ausible signals
118 Kind of station
119 Word off
120 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
121 Cowboy, at times
122 Where
123 Chopped food
124 Old garment
125 Dismounted
126 Great
127 Blarney together
128 Sign gas
129 Part of Eur.
130 Singer
131 Possible
132 Tormant, in a way
133 Delightfully
134 Understands
135 Tear open
136 More wan
137 Unmarked
138 Ausible signals
139 Kind of station
140 Word off
141 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
142 Cowboy, at times
143 Where
144 Chopped food
145 Old garment
146 Dismounted
147 Great
148 Blarney together
149 Sign gas
150 Part of Eur.
151 Singer
152 Possible
153 Tormant, in a way
154 Delightfully
155 Understands
156 Tear open
157 More wan
158 Unmarked
159 Ausible signals
160 Kind of station
161 Word off
162 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
163 Cowboy, at times
164 Where
165 Chopped food
166 Old garment
167 Dismounted
168 Great
169 Blarney together
170 Sign gas
171 Part of Eur.
172 Singer
173 Possible
174 Tormant, in a way
175 Delightfully
176 Understands
177 Tear open
178 More wan
179 Unmarked
180 Ausible signals
181 Kind of station
182 Word off
183 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
184 Cowboy, at times
185 Where
186 Chopped food
187 Old garment
188 Dismounted
189 Great
190 Blarney together
191 Sign gas
192 Part of Eur.
193 Singer
194 Possible
195 Tormant, in a way
196 Delightfully
197 Understands
198 Tear open
199 More wan
200 Unmarked
201 Ausible signals
202 Kind of station
203 Word off
204 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
205 Cowboy, at times
206 Where
207 Chopped food
208 Old garment
209 Dismounted
210 Great
211 Blarney together
212 Sign gas
213 Part of Eur.
214 Singer
215 Possible
216 Tormant, in a way
217 Delightfully
218 Understands
219 Tear open
220 More wan
221 Unmarked
222 Ausible signals
223 Kind of station
224 Word off
225 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
226 Cowboy, at times
227 Where
228 Chopped food
229 Old garment
230 Dismounted
231 Great
232 Blarney together
233 Sign gas
234 Part of Eur.
235 Singer
236 Possible
237 Tormant, in a way
238 Delightfully
239 Understands
240 Tear open
241 More wan
242 Unmarked
243 Ausible signals
244 Kind of station
245 Word off
246 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
247 Cowboy, at times
248 Where
249 Chopped food
250 Old garment
251 Dismounted
252 Great
253 Blarney together
254 Sign gas
255 Part of Eur.
256 Singer
257 Possible
258 Tormant, in a way
259 Delightfully
260 Understands
261 Tear open
262 More wan
263 Unmarked
264 Ausible signals
265 Kind of station
266 Word off
267 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
268 Cowboy, at times
269 Where
270 Chopped food
271 Old garment
272 Dismounted
273 Great
274 Blarney together
275 Sign gas
276 Part of Eur.
277 Singer
278 Possible
279 Tormant, in a way
280 Delightfully
281 Understands
282 Tear open
283 More wan
284 Unmarked
285 Ausible signals
286 Kind of station
287 Word off
288 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
289 Cowboy, at times
290 Where
291 Chopped food
292 Old garment
293 Dismounted
294 Great
295 Blarney together
296 Sign gas
297 Part of Eur.
298 Singer
299 Possible
300 Tormant, in a way
301 Delightfully
302 Understands
303 Tear open
304 More wan
305 Unmarked
306 Ausible signals
307 Kind of station
308 Word off
309 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
310 Cowboy, at times
311 Where
312 Chopped food
313 Old garment
314 Dismounted
315 Great
316 Blarney together
317 Sign gas
318 Part of Eur.
319 Singer
320 Possible
321 Tormant, in a way
322 Delightfully
323 Understands
324 Tear open
325 More wan
326 Unmarked
327 Ausible signals
328 Kind of station
329 Word off
330 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
331 Cowboy, at times
332 Where
333 Chopped food
334 Old garment
335 Dismounted
336 Great
337 Blarney together
338 Sign gas
339 Part of Eur.
340 Singer
341 Possible
342 Tormant, in a way
343 Delightfully
344 Understands
345 Tear open
346 More wan
347 Unmarked
348 Ausible signals
349 Kind of station
350 Word off
351 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
352 Cowboy, at times
353 Where
354 Chopped food
355 Old garment
356 Dismounted
357 Great
358 Blarney together
359 Sign gas
360 Part of Eur.
361 Singer
362 Possible
363 Tormant, in a way
364 Delightfully
365 Understands
366 Tear open
367 More wan
368 Unmarked
369 Ausible signals
370 Kind of station
371 Word off
372 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
373 Cowboy, at times
374 Where
375 Chopped food
376 Old garment
377 Dismounted
378 Great
379 Blarney together
380 Sign gas
381 Part of Eur.
382 Singer
383 Possible
384 Tormant, in a way
385 Delightfully
386 Understands
387 Tear open
388 More wan
389 Unmarked
390 Ausible signals
391 Kind of station
392 Word off
393 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
394 Cowboy, at times
395 Where
396 Chopped food
397 Old garment
398 Dismounted
399 Great
400 Blarney together
401 Sign gas
402 Part of Eur.
403 Singer
404 Possible
405 Tormant, in a way
406 Delightfully
407 Understands
408 Tear open
409 More wan
410 Unmarked
411 Ausible signals
412 Kind of station
413 Word off
414 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
415 Cowboy, at times
416 Where
417 Chopped food
418 Old garment
419 Dismounted
420 Great
421 Blarney together
422 Sign gas
423 Part of Eur.
424 Singer
425 Possible
426 Tormant, in a way
427 Delightfully
428 Understands
429 Tear open
430 More wan
431 Unmarked
432 Ausible signals
433 Kind of station
434 Word off
435 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
436 Cowboy, at times
437 Where
438 Chopped food
439 Old garment
440 Dismounted
441 Great
442 Blarney together
443 Sign gas
444 Part of Eur.
445 Singer
446 Possible
447 Tormant, in a way
448 Delightfully
449 Understands
450 Tear open
451 More wan
452 Unmarked
453 Ausible signals
454 Kind of station
455 Word off
456 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
457 Cowboy, at times
458 Where
459 Chopped food
460 Old garment
461 Dismounted
462 Great
463 Blarney together
464 Sign gas
465 Part of Eur.
466 Singer
467 Possible
468 Tormant, in a way
469 Delightfully
470 Understands
471 Tear open
472 More wan
473 Unmarked
474 Ausible signals
475 Kind of station
476 Word off
477 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
478 Cowboy, at times
479 Where
480 Chopped food
481 Old garment
482 Dismounted
483 Great
484 Blarney together
485 Sign gas
486 Part of Eur.
487 Singer
488 Possible
489 Tormant, in a way
490 Delightfully
491 Understands
492 Tear open
493 More wan
494 Unmarked
495 Ausible signals
496 Kind of station
497 Word off
498 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
499 Cowboy, at times
500 Where
501 Chopped food
502 Old garment
503 Dismounted
504 Great
505 Blarney together
506 Sign gas
507 Part of Eur.
508 Singer
509 Possible
510 Tormant, in a way
511 Delightfully
512 Understands
513 Tear open
514 More wan
515 Unmarked
516 Ausible signals
517 Kind of station
518 Word off
519 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
520 Cowboy, at times
521 Where
522 Chopped food
523 Old garment
524 Dismounted
525 Great
526 Blarney together
527 Sign gas
528 Part of Eur.
529 Singer
530 Possible
531 Tormant, in a way
532 Delightfully
533 Understands
534 Tear open
535 More wan
536 Unmarked
537 Ausible signals
538 Kind of station
539 Word off
540 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
541 Cowboy, at times
542 Where
543 Chopped food
544 Old garment
545 Dismounted
546 Great
547 Blarney together
548 Sign gas
549 Part of Eur.
550 Singer
551 Possible
552 Tormant, in a way
553 Delightfully
554 Understands
555 Tear open
556 More wan
557 Unmarked
558 Ausible signals
559 Kind of station
560 Word off
561 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
562 Cowboy, at times
563 Where
564 Chopped food
565 Old garment
566 Dismounted
567 Great
568 Blarney together
569 Sign gas
570 Part of Eur.
571 Singer
572 Possible
573 Tormant, in a way
574 Delightfully
575 Understands
576 Tear open
577 More wan
578 Unmarked
579 Ausible signals
580 Kind of station
581 Word off
582 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
583 Cowboy, at times
584 Where
585 Chopped food
586 Old garment
587 Dismounted
588 Great
589 Blarney together
590 Sign gas
591 Part of Eur.
592 Singer
593 Possible
594 Tormant, in a way
595 Delightfully
596 Understands
597 Tear open
598 More wan
599 Unmarked
600 Ausible signals
601 Kind of station
602 Word off
603 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
604 Cowboy, at times
605 Where
606 Chopped food
607 Old garment
608 Dismounted
609 Great
610 Blarney together
611 Sign gas
612 Part of Eur.
613 Singer
614 Possible
615 Tormant, in a way
616 Delightfully
617 Understands
618 Tear open
619 More wan
620 Unmarked
621 Ausible signals
622 Kind of station
623 Word off
624 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
625 Cowboy, at times
626 Where
627 Chopped food
628 Old garment
629 Dismounted
630 Great
631 Blarney together
632 Sign gas
633 Part of Eur.
634 Singer
635 Possible
636 Tormant, in a way
637 Delightfully
638 Understands
639 Tear open
640 More wan
641 Unmarked
642 Ausible signals
643 Kind of station
644 Word off
645 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
646 Cowboy, at times
647 Where
648 Chopped food
649 Old garment
650 Dismounted
651 Great
652 Blarney together
653 Sign gas
654 Part of Eur.
655 Singer
656 Possible
657 Tormant, in a way
658 Delightfully
659 Understands
660 Tear open
661 More wan
662 Unmarked
663 Ausible signals
664 Kind of station
665 Word off
666 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
667 Cowboy, at times
668 Where
669 Chopped food
670 Old garment
671 Dismounted
672 Great
673 Blarney together
674 Sign gas
675 Part of Eur.
676 Singer
677 Possible
678 Tormant, in a way
679 Delightfully
680 Understands
681 Tear open
682 More wan
683 Unmarked
684 Ausible signals
685 Kind of station
686 Word off
687 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
688 Cowboy, at times
689 Where
690 Chopped food
691 Old garment
692 Dismounted
693 Great
694 Blarney together
695 Sign gas
696 Part of Eur.
697 Singer
698 Possible
699 Tormant, in a way
700 Delightfully
701 Understands
702 Tear open
703 More wan
704 Unmarked
705 Ausible signals
706 Kind of station
707 Word off
708 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
709 Cowboy, at times
710 Where
711 Chopped food
712 Old garment
713 Dismounted
714 Great
715 Blarney together
716 Sign gas
717 Part of Eur.
718 Singer
719 Possible
720 Tormant, in a way
721 Delightfully
722 Understands
723 Tear open
724 More wan
725 Unmarked
726 Ausible signals
727 Kind of station
728 Word off
729 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
730 Cowboy, at times
731 Where
732 Chopped food
733 Old garment
734 Dismounted
735 Great
736 Blarney together
737 Sign gas
738 Part of Eur.
739 Singer
740 Possible
741 Tormant, in a way
742 Delightfully
743 Understands
744 Tear open
745 More wan
746 Unmarked
747 Ausible signals
748 Kind of station
749 Word off
750 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
751 Cowboy, at times
752 Where
753 Chopped food
754 Old garment
755 Dismounted
756 Great
757 Blarney together
758 Sign gas
759 Part of Eur.
760 Singer
761 Possible
762 Tormant, in a way
763 Delightfully
764 Understands
765 Tear open
766 More wan
767 Unmarked
768 Ausible signals
769 Kind of station
770 Word off
771 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
772 Cowboy, at times
773 Where
774 Chopped food
775 Old garment
776 Dismounted
777 Great
778 Blarney together
779 Sign gas
780 Part of Eur.
781 Singer
782 Possible
783 Tormant, in a way
784 Delightfully
785 Understands
786 Tear open
787 More wan
788 Unmarked
789 Ausible signals
790 Kind of station
791 Word off
792 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
793 Cowboy, at times
794 Where
795 Chopped food
796 Old garment
797 Dismounted
798 Great
799 Blarney together
800 Sign gas
801 Part of Eur.
802 Singer
803 Possible
804 Tormant, in a way
805 Delightfully
806 Understands
807 Tear open
808 More wan
809 Unmarked
810 Ausible signals
811 Kind of station
812 Word off
813 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
814 Cowboy, at times
815 Where
816 Chopped food
817 Old garment
818 Dismounted
819 Great
820 Blarney together
821 Sign gas
822 Part of Eur.
823 Singer
824 Possible
825 Tormant, in a way
826 Delightfully
827 Understands
828 Tear open
829 More wan
830 Unmarked
831 Ausible signals
832 Kind of station
833 Word off
834 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
835 Cowboy, at times
836 Where
837 Chopped food
838 Old garment
839 Dismounted
840 Great
841 Blarney together
842 Sign gas
843 Part of Eur.
844 Singer
845 Possible
846 Tormant, in a way
847 Delightfully
848 Understands
849 Tear open
850 More wan
851 Unmarked
852 Ausible signals
853 Kind of station
854 Word off
855 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
856 Cowboy, at times
857 Where
858 Chopped food
859 Old garment
860 Dismounted
861 Great
862 Blarney together
863 Sign gas
864 Part of Eur.
865 Singer
866 Possible
867 Tormant, in a way
868 Delightfully
869 Understands
870 Tear open
871 More wan
872 Unmarked
873 Ausible signals
874 Kind of station
875 Word off
876 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
877 Cowboy, at times
878 Where
879 Chopped food
880 Old garment
881 Dismounted
882 Great
883 Blarney together
884 Sign gas
885 Part of Eur.
886 Singer
887 Possible
888 Tormant, in a way
889 Delightfully
890 Understands
891 Tear open
892 More wan
893 Unmarked
894 Ausible signals
895 Kind of station
896 Word off
897 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
898 Cowboy, at times
899 Where
900 Chopped food
901 Old garment
902 Dismounted
903 Great
904 Blarney together
905 Sign gas
906 Part of Eur.
907 Singer
908 Possible
909 Tormant, in a way
910 Delightfully
911 Understands
912 Tear open
913 More wan
914 Unmarked
915 Ausible signals
916 Kind of station
917 Word off
918 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
919 Cowboy, at times
920 Where
921 Chopped food
922 Old garment
923 Dismounted
924 Great
925 Blarney together
926 Sign gas
927 Part of Eur.
928 Singer
929 Possible
930 Tormant, in a way
931 Delightfully
932 Understands
933 Tear open
934 More wan
935 Unmarked
936 Ausible signals
937 Kind of station
938 Word off
939 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
940 Cowboy, at times
941 Where
942 Chopped food
943 Old garment
944 Dismounted
945 Great
946 Blarney together
947 Sign gas
948 Part of Eur.
949 Singer
950 Possible
951 Tormant, in a way
952 Delightfully
953 Understands
954 Tear open
955 More wan
956 Unmarked
957 Ausible signals
958 Kind of station
959 Word off
960 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
961 Cowboy, at times
962 Where
963 Chopped food
964 Old garment
965 Dismounted
966 Great
967 Blarney together
968 Sign gas
969 Part of Eur.
970 Singer
971 Possible
972 Tormant, in a way
973 Delightfully
974 Understands
975 Tear open
976 More wan
977 Unmarked
978 Ausible signals
979 Kind of station
980 Word off
981 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
982 Cowboy, at times
983 Where
984 Chopped food
985 Old garment
986 Dismounted
987 Great
988 Blarney together
989 Sign gas
990 Part of Eur.
991 Singer
992 Possible
993 Tormant, in a way
994 Delightfully
995 Understands
996 Tear open
997 More wan
998 Unmarked
999 Ausible signals
1000 Kind of station
1001 Word off
1002 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1003 Cowboy, at times
1004 Where
1005 Chopped food
1006 Old garment
1007 Dismounted
1008 Great
1009 Blarney together
1010 Sign gas
1011 Part of Eur.
1012 Singer
1013 Possible
1014 Tormant, in a way
1015 Delightfully
1016 Understands
1017 Tear open
1018 More wan
1019 Unmarked
1020 Ausible signals
1021 Kind of station
1022 Word off
1023 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1024 Cowboy, at times
1025 Where
1026 Chopped food
1027 Old garment
1028 Dismounted
1029 Great
1030 Blarney together
1031 Sign gas
1032 Part of Eur.
1033 Singer
1034 Possible
1035 Tormant, in a way
1036 Delightfully
1037 Understands
1038 Tear open
1039 More wan
1040 Unmarked
1041 Ausible signals
1042 Kind of station
1043 Word off
1044 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1045 Cowboy, at times
1046 Where
1047 Chopped food
1048 Old garment
1049 Dismounted
1050 Great
1051 Blarney together
1052 Sign gas
1053 Part of Eur.
1054 Singer
1055 Possible
1056 Tormant, in a way
1057 Delightfully
1058 Understands
1059 Tear open
1060 More wan
1061 Unmarked
1062 Ausible signals
1063 Kind of station
1064 Word off
1065 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1066 Cowboy, at times
1067 Where
1068 Chopped food
1069 Old garment
1070 Dismounted
1071 Great
1072 Blarney together
1073 Sign gas
1074 Part of Eur.
1075 Singer
1076 Possible
1077 Tormant, in a way
1078 Delightfully
1079 Understands
1080 Tear open
1081 More wan
1082 Unmarked
1083 Ausible signals
1084 Kind of station
1085 Word off
1086 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1087 Cowboy, at times
1088 Where
1089 Chopped food
1090 Old garment
1091 Dismounted
1092 Great
1093 Blarney together
1094 Sign gas
1095 Part of Eur.
1096 Singer
1097 Possible
1098 Tormant, in a way
1099 Delightfully
1100 Understands
1101 Tear open
1102 More wan
1103 Unmarked
1104 Ausible signals
1105 Kind of station
1106 Word off
1107 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1108 Cowboy, at times
1109 Where
1110 Chopped food
1111 Old garment
1112 Dismounted
1113 Great
1114 Blarney together
1115 Sign gas
1116 Part of Eur.
1117 Singer
1118 Possible
1119 Tormant, in a way
1120 Delightfully
1121 Understands
1122 Tear open
1123 More wan
1124 Unmarked
1125 Ausible signals
1126 Kind of station
1127 Word off
1128 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1129 Cowboy, at times
1130 Where
1131 Chopped food
1132 Old garment
1133 Dismounted
1134 Great
1135 Blarney together
1136 Sign gas
1137 Part of Eur.
1138 Singer
1139 Possible
1140 Tormant, in a way
1141 Delightfully
1142 Understands
1143 Tear open
1144 More wan
1145 Unmarked
1146 Ausible signals
1147 Kind of station
1148 Word off
1149 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1150 Cowboy, at times
1151 Where
1152 Chopped food
1153 Old garment
1154 Dismounted
1155 Great
1156 Blarney together
1157 Sign gas
1158 Part of Eur.
1159 Singer
1160 Possible
1161 Tormant, in a way
1162 Delightfully
1163 Understands
1164 Tear open
1165 More wan
1166 Unmarked
1167 Ausible signals
1168 Kind of station
1169 Word off
1170 Quadrangle surrounded by obstacles
1171 Cowboy, at times
1172 Where
1173 Chopped food
1174 Old garment
1175 Dismounted
1176 Great
1177 Blarney together
1178 Sign gas
1179 Part of Eur.
1180 Singer
1181 Possible
1182 Tormant, in a way
1183 Delightfully
1184 Understands
1185 Tear open
1

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Les négociations sur le retrait d'Hébron menacées «d'explosion»

Les Palestiniens ont évoqué cette semaine une possible «explosion» des négociations sur Hébron après la suggestion d'Israël de reporter de près de deux ans l'échéance de son retrait de la majeure partie de la Cisjordanie.

Le porte-parole palestinien, M. Marwan Kanafani, a indiqué que les déclarations faites en ce sens par le Premier ministre israélien «pourraient faire exploser les négociations».

Selon la presse israélienne, M. Netanyahu (notre photo) a affirmé à ses ministres que mai 1999 devait constituer une date-butoir pour le respect de «tous les engagements» de part et d'autre. Une déclaration qui signifierait que le Premier ministre israélien souhaite que le retrait de son armée de la Cisjordanie s'achève en mai 1999, alors qu'il est prévu en septembre 1997 par les accords d'Oslo sur l'autonomie.

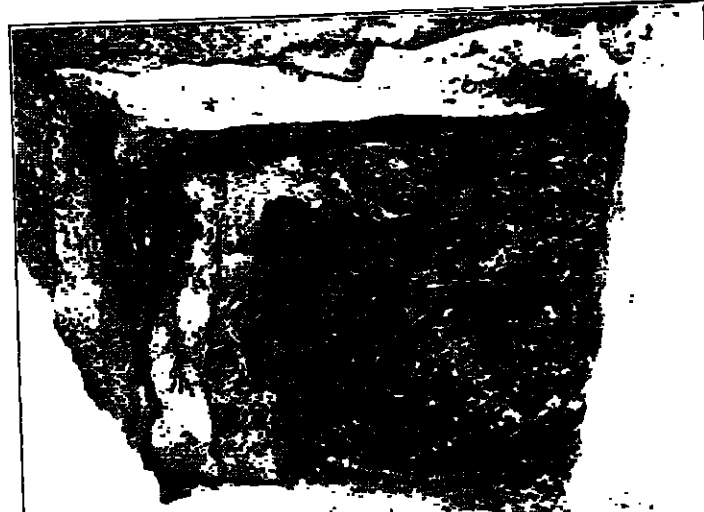
Cette querelle sur l'après-Hébron bloquait hier encore les négociations sur un redéploiement israélien hors de cette ville de Cisjordanie, retrait qui a déjà plus de neuf mois de retard sur le calendrier.



Société

Les menaces du tourisme

Pour la Jordanie, qui a décidé de faire du tourisme l'un des principaux secteurs de son économie, la protection des sites est primordiale, de nombreuses menaces pesant sur son patrimoine.



Une campagne télévisée destinée à inciter les citoyens à respecter les sites touristiques devrait être bientôt lancée.

Attirer l'attention du public sur l'importance du patrimoine national et des antiquités. Tel est l'objectif d'une campagne télévisée lancée par la Société royale de conservation de la nature (SRCN) et de l'association des amis de l'archéologie. Cette campagne soutenue par le ministère du Tourisme et des Antiquités comprendra plusieurs messages d'avertissement destinés à mettre en garde contre les dégradations sur les sites touristiques, ainsi que de nombreux émissions sur les travaux de mise en valeur engagés dans le pays.

En décidant de jouer la carte du tourisme, la Jordanie se doit en effet aujourd'hui de protéger son capital générateur de devises. Car les menaces planant sur les vieilles pierres sont nombreuses.

Selon Ghazi Saoudi, directeur du comité du patrimoine national à la SRCN, les fouilles illégales, la pollution et les dégradations volontaires sont les menaces principales qui pèsent sur les sites. Cette campagne tentera donc de responsabiliser les Jordaniens. «L'importance de cette opération tient à son caractère éducatif», explique Kamel Khloof, architecte rénovateur. «Car les gens ne sont pas toujours au courant des mesures de protection et de conservation qui existent.»

Le dilemme qui se pose aujourd'hui est celui du développement concerté du tourisme et de la protection des sites historiques. «Les sites ont d'abord une importance touristique», commente Kamel Khloof. «Le tourisme prime souvent sur la conservation des sites, et parfois même sur l'intérêt des habitants.»

Un regret partagé par Ammar Khammach, architecte re-

nommé qui a œuvré pour la restauration de nombreux lieux en Jordanie.

«La priorité est donnée au développement du tourisme sans penser à la préservation des sites.» Pour lui, Um Qais, au nord de la Jordanie, est un bon exemple pour illustrer cette politique. Des oliviers datant de l'époque ottomane y ont en effet été abattus pour permettre l'aménagement d'un parking. Et l'ancien canal romain de ce site, malgré les efforts déployés pour le protéger, sert désormais de puits pour les eaux usées.

Le développement de chaque site et notamment de ses infrastructures touristiques, doit être soigneusement étudié. «Tous les plans de rénovation sont soumis à un comité de spécialistes», explique Kamel Mahadin, architecte conseiller auprès du ministère du Tourisme et des Antiquités. Un comité qu'Ammar Khammach juge insuffisant, regrettant une meilleure coordination entre architectes spécialisés et autorités ministérielles.

L'association des Amis de l'archéologie juge elle aussi cette coopération essentielle entre experts et ministères. Selon Rahmi Khouri, président de cette association, c'est par la discussion qu'un développement touristique concerté sera possible. «Il est en effet nécessaire de prendre en compte les avis de tous les gens concernés.»

Un besoin urgent de nouveaux musées

Si la protection des sites touristiques doit passer par un développement plus harmonieux, elle doit aussi prendre en compte les nombreuses dégra-

dations liées aux vols. Devenus pour quelques uns un moyen aisé de s'enrichir, les fouilles sauvages et le trafic d'objets anciens représentent un grave problème. Ces infractions commises par des individus ou des bandes bien organisées nuisent considérablement au patrimoine du pays.

Or lutter contre ces exactions n'est pas chose facile. «La Jordanie possède un nombre incalculable de sites archéologiques», explique Ghazi Bicheh, directeur du département des Antiquités. «Clôturer chacun de ces endroits n'est pas une solution car les professionnels du vol connaissent la parade. On ne peut pas mettre un gardien pour chaque site», explique Ghazi Bicheh. «La solution, c'est de créer un musée national.» Actuellement, la Jordanie reste en effet dans le besoin urgent de nouveaux musées pour abriter les richesses du pays.

Une législation existe déjà

Economie

Oublier l'année 1996

Pour espérer retrouver un taux de croissance plus important cette année, la Jordanie doit procéder à certaines réformes économiques, et notamment favoriser les investissements locaux et étrangers.

Les prévisions pour l'année 1997 de la plupart des économistes jordaniens ne sont pas très bonnes. En fait, tous semblent échaudés par l'expérience de l'année dernière. Au début de 1996, le Fonds monétaire international avait annoncé toutes sortes de bonnes choses pour notre économie. Un optimisme alors partagé par les responsables jordaniens.

Or, l'année 1996 s'est révélée être la plus mauvaise pour l'économie jordannienne depuis la fin de la guerre du Golfe en 1991. Après le rebondissement économique de 1992 et le chiffre record de la croissance dépassant 10%, les années 1993-95 ont connu un taux moyen de croissance du Produit national brut de 6%. Une performance qui permettrait alors encore à la Banque mondiale de classer la Jordanie au rang des bons élèves. Des encouragements qui laissent naturellement espérer une bonne année 1996.

Or la triste réalité est que les espoirs des Jordaniens ont été trop gonflés. Pour des raisons politiques, on a construit des châteaux de sable à Washington et Tel-Aviv à propos des bénéfices de la paix. Le fameux sommet économique d'Amman est venu renforcer ces illusions. Mais quatre mois après cet événement semblait désormais presque relever de la mythologie, les grands projets régionaux sont gelés et les investisseurs hésitent toujours en ce

qui concerne la Jordanie. Alors peut-on s'attendre à ce que l'année 1997 soit meilleure?

La réponse est que dans les mois à venir, la situation économique de la Jordanie peut encore se détériorer, avant de connaître à nouveau une amélioration.

Les dernières estimations officielles pour le taux de croissance de l'année passée ne sont que de 4%. En prenant en compte le fait que la population jordannienne augmente elle de 3% par an, on obtient une croissance annuelle d'environ 1%. Ce qui équivaut, plus ou moins, à une situation de stagnation.

Comme il est peu probable que le rythme de croissance de la population se ralentisse beaucoup en 1997, il ne reste qu'à espérer que la Jordanie connaisse un phénomène semblable à celui de 1992 pour retrouver un fort taux de croissance.

Des taux d'intérêt trop élevés

Mais les chances de voir un tel phénomène se répéter sont faibles. La conjoncture politique régionale n'est pas favorable, et les réformes internes de l'économie jordannienne sont trop modestes et trop lentes pour réussir à vraiment changer la situation.

L'économie jordannienne souffre actuellement de taux d'intérêt trop élevés.

Pour maintenir le dinar à un

niveau élevé par rapport au dollar, la Jordanie est obligée d'appliquer une politique de forts taux d'intérêt.

Une mesure qui pénalise considérablement l'investissement. Pour emprunter dans une banque à Amman, il faut aujourd'hui accepter de payer un taux oscillant entre 15 et 15,5%. Un chiffre qui pourrait bien atteindre 18% d'ici le mois de juin prochain.

Si cette politique permet de défendre le précieux dinar, elle étrangle en revanche l'investissement local.

Or, la tâche du gouvernement est justement d'encourager les investisseurs locaux et étrangers à injecter des fonds dans l'économie jordannienne pour la rendre plus dynamique.

Faire preuve d'un pessimisme démesuré serait bien sûr exagéré. Mais il faut cette année à tout prix éviter les espoirs gonflés des propagandistes pro-islamistes qui ne cessent de parler des prochains bénéfices de la paix censés résoudre tous les problèmes de l'économie jordannienne.

Une seule chose est en fait certaine à l'heure actuelle: la paix dans la région est encore bien loin, et les mois à venir ne donnent pas à notre économie beaucoup de raisons d'espérer.

MEBA S.A.R.L.
Riad al Khouri

Eau

Une délicate concertation régionale

Une conférence sur la gestion locale de l'eau a réussi à réunir à Marseille pratiquement tous les pays méditerranéens. Une première qui n'a malheureusement pas débouché sur de grandes décisions en raison d'importants blocages politiques.

La première conférence euro-méditerranéenne sur la gestion locale de l'eau qui s'est réunie fin novembre à Marseille a montré à quel point il est difficile de séparer l'aspect technique de l'aspect politique à propos de la question de l'eau. Afin de réunir à la même table tous les pays de la région, y compris le Liban et la Syrie qui refusent notamment de prendre part aux groupes de travail multilatéraux issus de la conférence de Madrid, les organisateurs de cette réunion ont pris soin de ne pas aborder la gestion de l'eau au niveau régional. Une base de discussion qui, comme l'explique Christian Chesnot, journaliste au magazine international de l'eau Hydroplus et auteur d'un ouvrage sur la question de l'eau au Proche-Orient, n'a pas permis d'accoucher de décisions importantes. «L'idée était de parler de gestion locale et technique de l'eau. Ainsi il était possible d'évacuer tout le problème politique pour se concentrer sur une gestion locale et non régionale, technique et non politique». Or, cette formule destinée à rassembler tout le monde autour de la même table, a rapidement montré ses limites. «Pour les Palestiniens, parler de gestion technique ou locale de l'eau ne mène à rien alors qu'ils n'ont pas le simple droit d'avoir de l'eau. Cela revient à mettre la charrue avant les bœufs», regrette Christian Chesnot.

Une situation que le chef de la délégation palestinienne Riyad Al-Khoudary a d'ailleurs vivement dénoncée en soulignant les retards énormes que connaissent certains projets en Cisjordanie et à Gaza. «Depuis les dernières élections israéliennes, nous sommes complètement perturbés car tous les dossiers en cours de négociations sont retardés. Le comité conjoint israélo-palestinien sur l'eau ne s'est pas réuni depuis mars dernier, et de nombreux projets, planifiés et financés, sont toujours en attente d'approbation. Nous avons l'impression que les Israéliens ne nous écoutent pas et font traîner les choses en

longueur», déclarait récemment Riyad Al-Khoudary.

La seule décision concrète annoncée à l'issue de cette conférence a été la création d'un réseau d'information sur l'eau en Méditerranée. Un système qui devrait permettre à tous les pays signataires de la déclaration de Marseille d'échanger leurs données, leurs expériences dans le domaine de l'eau. Une initiative qui ne peut, une fois encore, réellement être efficace sans prendre en compte l'aspect politique que revêt la question de l'eau dans la région. «On imagine mal des pays, virtuellement en guerre comme la Syrie et Israël, échanger des informations hydrauliques qui sont toujours classées «secret défense». Dans les accords d'Oslo qui prévoyaient ce type de coopération «technique», les gestionnaires de l'eau palestiniens attendent toujours que la partie israélienne leur fournisse des données hydrauliques», explique Christian Chesnot.

En ne pouvant inciter qu'à la protection de l'eau dans la région, et non au partage, la déclaration de la conférence de

Marseille montre combien il est difficile d'aborder le problème de l'eau au niveau régional.

Une prochaine réunion en Jordanie

Or le temps presse pour certains pays qui voient leurs réserves d'eau diminuer dramatiquement chaque année. C'est notamment le cas pour la Jordanie, qui avec la Libye, seule absente à Marseille, Malte, Israël et les territoires palestiniens, utilisent déjà à plus de 100% ses ressources renouvelables, ne laissant donc plus à ses ressources en eau le temps de se renouveler.

Les participants de la conférence de Marseille se sont en tout cas déjà mis d'accord pour se rencontrer à nouveau et étudier la mise en place du réseau d'information régional.

Ce prochain rendez-vous devrait d'ailleurs avoir lieu au printemps en Jordanie et devrait réunir au moins une douzaine de pays européens et méditerranéens.

Olivier Bras

Reportage

Une page difficile à tourner pour Naplouse

Voilà maintenant plus d'un an que les troupes israéliennes se sont retirées du centre-ville de Naplouse. Depuis, la ville apprend à revivre dans une atmosphère de paix. Mais les habitants ne peuvent pas oublier la présence israélienne aux portes de leur ville.



Des Palestiniens célébrant le 11 décembre 1995 à Naplouse la fin de l'occupation israélienne.

Après cinquante

années de guerre, Naplouse apprend à vivre aujourd'hui dans une atmosphère de sécurité. Longtemps occupée, cette ville située au nord de la Cisjordanie se relève pour entrer dans une nouvelle ère. Naplouse, qui a été prise par les Israéliens en 1967 pendant la guerre de six jours, fait partie des villes «rendues» à l'Autorité nationale palestinienne conformément aux accords de paix. Elle n'a en fait pas réellement été rendue, mais a connu le redéploiement des Israéliens. Avant, elle était placée sous le contrôle des soldats israéliens qui arrêtaient les enfants de l'Intifada. Aujourd'hui l'ambiance est calme, paisible et détendue. Une ambiance qui peut cependant rapidement redevenir explosive, comme l'on a pu le constater au lieu fin septembre dans les territoires palestiniens et qui ont été particulièrement violents à Naplouse.

S'il n'y a plus de heurts quotidiens entre Israéliens et Palestiniens, la présence militaire israélienne se fait encore bien sentir. La tension s'est en fait déplacée autour de Naplouse. Sur les routes qui entourent la ville, les déplacements sont difficiles pour les Arabes.

Naplouse est une petite ville nichée entre deux montagnes gigantesques, Garizim et Balata, qui redécouvre une vie longtemps oubliée. Des générations qui sont nées au milieu des coups de feu et du couvre-feu s'orientent aujourd'hui vers une nouvelle lutte qui utilise cette fois la culture et la persévérance pour essayer de faire revivre les jours glorieux de la Palestine, relevant ainsi un nouveau défi contre les Israéliens.

Le village surveillé par deux implantations israéliennes aux sommets des montagnes, est divisé en deux, à l'instar de chaque ville possédant un lourd

passé historique. Dans la nouvelle ville, qui s'est développée après le redéploiement des Israéliens, les investisseurs ont construit des appartements, des magasins. Les habitants ont eux aussi effectué des restaurations et entrepris de nouvelles constructions pour redonner de la vie à cette ville longtemps étranglée.

Sur les montagnes, tout autour du vieux Naplouse, les projets de construction de piscine ou clubs de sports se multiplient.

«Mais les projets industriels ou commerciaux sont irréalisables», commente un Palestinien de Naplouse. «Ce ne sont pas les Palestiniens qui peuvent les autoriser.»

Un sentiment d'encerclement

La vieille ville connaît elle l'agitation d'une ruée. Des vestiges romains mis au jour récemment bordent la rue menant du rond-point principal au cœur historique de la ville.

Les anciennes ruines avec leurs pavés témoignent elles aussi d'une époque révolue. Celle d'une longue guerre marquée par les martyrs de l'Intifada. Les ruines sont aujourd'hui en réfection grâce à une aide japonaise offerte à l'Autorité nationale palestinienne.

Elles plongent le flâneur dans un ensemble de traditions: l'artisanat, les pâtisseries, une spécialité de Naplouse, et les savons à l'huile d'olive, comme

ceux de Provence. Le nom d'Al Kassabeh est bien connu des Israéliens et des Palestiniens. Pendant l'Intifada, ce quartier était l'un des plus dangereux de la ville. Une particularité due à la son architecture typique de la région. Les maisons de chaque côté de la route communiquent entre elles par des ponts. Des arches en pierres délimitent les ruelles qui serpentent dans la ville.

Une de ces ruelles amène au hamman turc qui date du règne des Ottomans dans la région. Il a lui aussi été restauré et ouvert pour ceux qui recherchent tranquillité et repos.

Au milieu des maisons émergent des usines, celles qui produisent des savons à l'huile d'olive. Connue pour ses montagnes, la ville de Naplouse était aussi pour sa culture des oliviers et ses savons. La ruelle qui descend vers cette fabrique s'appelle toujours la rue des perles, en raison de la couleur du savon fabriqué et du nom-

bre de fabriques installées dans cette rue. Malheureusement, peu de fabriques sont encore en activité aujourd'hui.

Pendant l'Intifada, les jeunes appartenant au Fatah ou au Hamas se servaient de ces bâtiments comme de bases militaires où ils venaient se cacher ou organiser leurs activités. «Au début de l'Intifada, les Israéliens n'osaient pas entrer dans ce quartier, sachant que les jeunes de la résistance multipliaient les embuscades», raconte un jeune qui habite à côté d'une usine de savons désaffectée depuis l'occupation israélienne en 1967.

A présent, la situation a changé car les gens ont moins peur de se retrouver dans les prisons israéliennes. Mais c'est aujourd'hui la ville entière et ses 140 000 habitants qui ont le sentiment d'être prisonniers, encerclés par ceux qui se sont retirés du centre-ville.

Oroub el Abed

SECON

Pour les journalistes jordaniens, l'année 1996 a été bien meilleure que 1994, année marquée par de très nombreux procès et interpellations. Mais si on la compare à l'année 1995, le bilan n'est pas très bon.

1996 a vu l'incarcération de douze journalistes et l'interpellation d'une vingtaine d'autres. Comme toujours, les journalistes ont joué le rôle de bouc émissaire au milieu des changements et des bouleversements politiques accompagnant l'évolution de la société jordannienne. La presse, semble-t-il, devrait toujours se conformer aux principes, qui ne cessent de changer, des gouvernements successifs. Son rôle est de satisfaire les caprices des responsables politiques.

En 1994, par exemple, 25 procédures judiciaires ont été engagées à l'encontre de journalistes suite à la publication d'informations sur des «partis ou des groupes politiques interdits». Or, pour la plupart, ces «groupes interdits» étaient des comités populaires créés pour combattre la normalisation des relations avec Israël.

En 1995, le nombre de procédures judiciaires est tombé à onze, selon les statistiques établies par le gouvernement. Toutes sont une fois de plus liées aux changements politiques du gouvernement intervenus dans le royaume. Ainsi, le motif principal d'inculpation retenue contre les journalistes a été la publication d'articles jugés «offensants pour les dirigeants d'Etats voisins, amis ou arabes».

En 1996, on constate que la plupart des poursuites judiciaires sont liées aux émeutes de la fin qui ont secoué le Sud du pays au mois d'août dernier.

En résumé, le harcèlement contre les journalistes depuis la loi sur la presse de 1993 ne tient pas au manque de professionnalisme ou à la publication d'informations erronées. Les procédures judiciaires engagées ne sont pas non plus le résultat d'insultes à certaines personnes. Elles sont le résultat de leçons que le gouvernement souhaite donner à la presse pour imposer telle ou telle décision politique et la faire ainsi accepter par l'opinion publique.

On peut déduire de cette stratégie que les condamnations à venir concerneront les attaques dirigées contre l'unité nationale puisque 1997 sera en Jordanie l'année d'élections parlementaires. Un important débat a déjà commencé dans le pays sur la réforme de la loi électorale pour ce scrutin. Celui-ci donnera bien sûr lieu à des opinions différentes dont la publication pourrait déboucher sur d'éventuelles poursuites judiciaires.

Il faut donc souhaiter qu'au contraire, l'année à venir sera celle d'une plus grande liberté de la presse, et celle de la fin de la tutelle qu'exerce le gouvernement sur les journaux.

Sa'eda Kilani

Le Jourdain,
on y revient
Tous les jeudis
dans le Star
645380

Diplomatic Co

Algeria
Arabia
Austria
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Belgium
Bulgaria
Canada
China
Czech Republic
Denmark
Egypt
France
Germany
Greece
Hungary
India
Indonesia
Iran
Iraq
Italy
Japan
Jordan
Korea
Kuwait
Lebanon
Libya
Malaysia
Mexico
Morocco
New Zealand
Norway
Oman
Pakistan
Poland
Portugal
Romania
Russia
Saudi Arabia
Singapore
South Africa
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
Syria
Taiwan
Tanzania
Turkey
U.A.E.
United Kingdom
United States
Yemen
ZEC
Zimbabwe
ECSC
ICRC
UNDP
UNEP
UNRWA
UNICEF
UNESCO

Head Office: AL SHARQ
Tel: 778159 Fax: 781
AL J
CARRIAG
CARRIAG

ما كنا من العرب

JANUARY 1997

Survey suggests Jerusalem issue may not be deal-breaker in talks

Continued from page 1

Interviews with Israeli and Palestinian officials in the past few days have revealed that the issue of Jerusalem is not as much a deal-breaker as it was once thought to be. The survey, conducted by the Middle East Centre for Strategic Studies, found that while both sides have strong views on the city, there is a growing willingness to negotiate its status as part of a broader peace agreement. The findings suggest that the international community should continue to encourage dialogue and compromise, rather than focusing solely on the most contentious issues. The survey also highlighted the importance of economic and social cooperation between the two peoples, which could help build trust and reduce tensions. Overall, the results are optimistic, indicating that a peaceful resolution to the conflict is still within reach.

Activities	
Royal Cultural Centre	661026/7
American Centre Library	820101
British Council	636147/8
French Cultural Centre	637009
Goethe Institute	641993
Cervantes Institute (Spanish)	610858
Turkish Cultural Centre	639777
Haya Arts Centre	665195
Y.W.C.A.	641793
Y.W.M.A.	664251
Dar al Funun	643252
Alia Art Gallery	639303
Baladina Art Gallery	657132
Nabil Al Mashari Theatre	675571
Nabil & Hisham's Theatre	625155
Concord Cinema	677420
Plaza Cinema	669238
Philadelphia Cinema	634144
Sports Clubs	
Al Hussein Sports City	667181/5
Orthodox Club	810491
Royal Automobile Club	815410
Royal Shooting Club	736572
Royal Chess Club	673713
Royal Racing Club	09-801233
Jordan Bridge Club	076990
Amman Mun. Library	636111
Univ. of Jordan Library	843555
R.S.C.N.	837931/837937

LET YOUR NAME SOAR ABOVE AMMAN

To book your Advertisement Graphics and Designs on the Electronic Sign Boards on the SAFEWAY Bldg. ESHNANA Center, Jabal Alhussien & DOWNTOWN call 680357

Government Depts.	
The Prime Ministry	641211
Amman Greater Municipality	636111
Agriculture	686151
Awqaf & Islamic Affairs	666141
Culture / Jabal Amman	636391
Education & Higher Education	669181
Energy & Mineral Resources	815615
Finance	636321
Foreign Affairs	644361
Industry & Trade	663191
Information	641467
Interior Ministry	663111
Justice	663101
Labour	698186
Municipalities & Environment	641393
Parliamentary Affairs	641211
Planning	644466
Post & Communications	624301
Public Health	665131
Public Works & Housing	668481
Social Development	673191
Supplies	602121
Tourism & Antiquities	642311
Transport	641461
Water & Irrigation	680100
Youth / University	604701

Diplomatic Corps	Airlines
Algerian	641271/2
Australian	673246/7
Austrian	644635
Bahraini	664148/9
Brazilian	642183
Belgian	675683
Bulgarian	818151
Canadian	666124
Chilean	823360
Cyprus Honorary Cons	677559
Czech	671813/666135
Danish Consulate Gen	603703
Finnish Consulate	824654/824676
French	641273/4
German	689351
Greek	671331/2
Hungarian	815614
Icelandic Consulate	698851
Indian	637262
Indonesian	828911
Iraqi	639331
Italian	638185
Japanese	672486/7
Kuwaiti	675135/8
Libyan	693101/3
Lebanese	641381
Moroccan	641451
Netherlands	637962/625165
New Zealand Consulate	636760
North Korean	666349
Norwegian Embassy	644932/4
Omani	686155
Pakistani	622787
Palestine	677517
People's Rep. of China	666139
Philippines	645161
Polish	637153
Qatari	682666
Romanian	667738
Russian	641158
Saudi Arabian	814154/6
Slovenia Honorary Cons	861542
Sri Lanka	683905/704960
South Korean	660745/6
South Africa	811194
Spanish	614166/9
Sudanese	644251/2
Swedish	669177/9
Swiss	686416/7
Syrian	641076
Taiwan	671530
Tunisian	674307/8
Turkish	641251
U.A.E.	643347/643341
United Kingdom	823100
United States	820101
Yemen	642381
EEC Delegation	668191
ESCWA	694351/8
ICRC	688645
UNDP/WFP	668171/7
UNRWA	607398
UNICEF	629571
UNESCO	606559
Aqaba Hotels	
Al-Cazar	314131
Aqaba	314091
Aqaba Gulf Hotel	316636
Aquamarina 1	316250
Coral Beach	313521
Holiday Int'l	312426
Miramar	314340

Important Numbers	
Emergencies	
Police	192/621111
Civil Defence H.Q.	193/198199
Fire Brigade	622090/903
Ambulance	109
Blood Bank	775121
Traffic Police	625943/630703
Traffic Accidents	807467/8
Highway Police	787111
Hospitals	
Akleh Maternity	642441/2
Al-Ahli, Abdali	661164/6
Al-Bashir, Ashrafieh	775111/2/3
Al-Muasher Hospital	662227/9
Amal Hospital	674155
Army, Marka	891611/15
Hussein Medical Centre	813813
Italian-Al-Muharecc	777101/3
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Khaledi Maternity	642381/6
Malhas, J. Amman	636141
Palestine, Shmeisani	664171/4
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Shmeisani Hospital	607431
The Islamic, Abdali	660127/37
University Hospital	845845
General	
Amman Municipality	843402
Electricity Complaints	121
Prices complaints	666181
Hotel complaints	08/53200
Sewerage Complaints	896390
Water Complaints	656390/91
Jordan Television	774111/19
Radio Jordan	774111/19
Post Office Info	750981/2/3
Telephone Information	121

BUSINESSMAN GUIDE

Comfort Hotel Suites

Luxury Tel

Comfort

Service

Location

In the of Sweifyieh

Ammon

SHIPPING & TRANSPORT

AIRFREIGHT ?

SEA FREIGHT ?

PACKING ?

TRAVELLING ?

Let us handle it

Pizza Hut

World's No. 1 Pizza Chain

"Pizza Hut offers our beloved children a Free Exciting Gift with every kid's meal"

"Choose one of the many Exciting Gifts available now at Pizza Hut"

Many Villas & Apartments Furnished and Unfurnished for Rent & Sale

for more information please call

Abdoun Real Estate

Tel. 810605-810609

865605 Fax. 810520

Abdoun, Almouhassab Center.

ALCAZAR HOTEL

True Vacations come to live in our

Uniquely Moorish Style Hotel

our sea star diving center will unravel the secrets of the Red Sea to your wildest imagination

Tel: 314131/2

TO GET BETTER FURNITURE..... FOR YOUR OFFICE OR HOUSE.... JUST VISIT

Abdoun Real Estate

Tel: 666703

THE BEST MUSIC STORE

FREDDY FOR MUSIC

A NAME THAT YOU TRUST

Tel. 653496

CARDENS ST

HOSPITALITY

A SECURE HOTEL

SECURITY

GASTRONOMY

Fully Serviced Suites

A/C in Grand Hotel Style

EURO 301

Make Car Rental Simple

Shmeisani

Tel: 693399

We save you more

The most pleasurable shopping experience... it's just about everything you need at low prices

Amman, Jordan Tel. 314131

The First Class Hotel in Amman that has a Kitchenette in every room..!

Amman Tel: 607193

P.O. Box 9403 Fax 602434

Telex 23888 Darot Jo

Ideal Residence for Expatriates and Businessmen

Q Beauty Institute

Facials

Body skin treatment

Make-up

European manicures & pedicures

Amman Tel: 652279

Funny Bunny

THE BIGGEST THE MOST DELICIOUS AND CERTAINLY THE BEST HAMBURGER IN TOWN

Burger, Roast, Chicken

Ummalshih Almunawarah St. Tel: 652279

THE SECRET UNFOLDS

NOW OPEN FOR LUNCH & DINNER

The first & best Chinese Restaurant in Jordan

1st Circle, Jabal Amman, near Ahlyyah Girls School

Take away is available

Open daily 12:00-3:30pm

7:00- Midnight

Tel 638968

To Advertise in this space, call us at 652-380

Your first choice in Aqaba

AQABA GULF HOTEL

For reservations call (03) 316636

Fax (03) 318246

JR - SAT

Walid Jarrah Co.

Safeway-Tel: 685300

The Best PIZZA in Jordan

HOME IN, TAKE AWAY & DELIVERY

Mecca St. Jabr Trade Center

Tel: 685300

The most delicious Arabic Sweets

All types of Bread

Cakes & Pastries

7th circle, Tel. 820099

PIZZAS, ENGLISH, Cakes

Shmeisani, Tel. 699103

KAIS CENTRE FOR QUICK SERVICES

*Professional Drycleaning

*Shoes Repair

*Darning

*Engraving

*Upholstery & Carpet Cleaning

Al-Jaber & Housing Bank Shopping Centers

Tel: 679947 & 821656

The German Fashion House

Boutiques Kareman 14 Kareman 1

Janard

JOSEPH JANARD

wille BIG SIZES

Al-Jaber Shopping Center, Mecca St. Phone: 821656 & 814714

BERND BERGER

VIVENTY

Collection

CARRIAGE CARRIAGE

CARRIAGE

العربية

Rent a Car

Wasfi Al-Tal St. Tel: 695180 Fax: 682525

CARRIAGE CARRIAGE

CARRIAGE

Wasfi Al-Tal St. Tel: 695180 Fax: 682525

Barakat Auto Service Center

we offer:-

* Computerized Engine Check

* Electro Mechanical car check

* Automatic & Manual car wash services

* wheel balance maintenance

* Oil Change

Wasfi Al-Tal St. Tel: 685454 Fax: 682525

ARABESQUE CAFE

Not all "cafe's" are created equal

A Touch Of Class In True Arabian Style

Al-Shmeisani, Near Atc Ali, Middle East Bank Bldg. Tel: 698005

ARABESQUE CAFE

The Place For Finest Arabic Setting

Close Enough To Get Away From It All

